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LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

The Impact of Catholic High School Education:
Catholic High School Young Adult Alumnae Perception and Engagement
in Social Justice Related Activities

by
Antony J. Gaspar

A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the School of Education,
Loyola Marymount University,
in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Education

2013

The Impact of Catholic High School Education:
Catholic High School Young Adult Alumnae Perception and Engagement
in Social Justice Related Activities

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by

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This dissertation written by Antony J. Gaspar, under the direction of the Dissertation Committee, is approved and accepted by all committee members, in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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To my mother, Arulsesu Kanickai Mary, and father, Kokudi Visusam Antony

And my sisters and brother

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ABSTRACT

The Impact of Catholic High School Education: Catholic High School Young Adult Alumnae Perception and Engagement in Social Justice Related Activities

by

Antony John Joseph Gaspar

This mixed methods research investigated how young adult alumnae from a Catholic female high school perceive the impact of their high school service experience concerning their "beliefs" about the importance of service, current "engagement" in service, and their beliefs about and engagement with four Catholic Social Teaching principles (life and dignity, care for the poor, solidarity and common good, and rights and responsibilities) related to social justice.

This research draws data from young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single-sex high school in a metropolitan city of the United States. The data collection included a web-based survey (N=131), individual interview (n=9), and school documents review. Catholic theology of the human person, and Catholic social teaching principles served as the conceptual framework for data analysis.

The quantitative data revealed that Catholic high school service program experience

positively impacts participants' "beliefs" about the importance of service (65%), and the importance of four Catholic social teaching principles (73%). The qualitative data corroborates with the quantitative findings. However, participants lacked translating their beliefs in to action with only 42% reporting as "engaged" in service. Although a majority of participants (60%) reported as engaged in activities related to four CST principles, in reality only 25% are significantly engaged in service in the past 12 months. Catholic educators are invited to examine their service pedagogy and address factors that contribute to low level of service engagement. Further research is suggested to identify factors that would raise the level of service engagement in alumnae's young adult life.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Introduction

Bryk, Lee, & Holland (1993) in their foundational work on Catholic schools suggest that “education entails forming the basic disposition for citizenship in a democratic and pluralistic society. A commitment to the pursuit of truth, human compassion, and social justice is essential to society’s well being” (p. 289). In addition, the Second Vatican Council in its *Declaration on Christian Education* in 1965 (Flannery, 1996) states that "true education is directed towards the formation of the [total] human person" (sec. 1), and students must be guided to develop harmoniously their "physical, moral, and intellectual qualities" (sec. 1). The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (SCCE) (2009) also states that the goal of Catholic school education is the formation of the whole person. They assert that the Catholic school provides a "privileged environment" (SCCE, 2009, sec. 16) for its students in their holistic formation. Aligning with this vision of Catholic education, educators in Catholic schools take the whole person seriously, teaching "head, heart, and hand to work together" (Roels, 2004, p. 465). They consistently ask how to provide components of teaching that enrich intellectual analysis, discernment, compassion, integrity, and service (Roels, 2004). This pedagogical conviction is reflected in the mission statements of Catholic schools, affirming their efforts in fostering not only academic development in students but also physical, social, psychological, moral, cultural, and religious or spiritual growth.

Thus, the Catholic high school education process is more than just the academic development of the student. It is the development of the whole person, which attempts to

produce students aware of their moral and spiritual responsibilities, and conscious of the need for service to others in the context of the Catholic social teaching principles. Understanding service is an important part of the education of the whole person. Coe (2000) calls service "soul work since intellectual inquiry alone will not transform" (p. 99) and *To Teach as Jesus Did* (NCCB, 1973), an important directive from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, advocates a Catholic educational ministry which includes service to all mankind which flows from a sense of an experience of Christian community (sec. 28, p. 8). The inclusion of service oriented student formation for social justice in Catholic faith-based education "reflects and responds more fully than conventional education to an increasingly accepted view of what it means to be human" (Forbes, 1998, p. 1). The goal of Catholic education is to form students to become fully human persons, to express genuine social solidarity, to live in community cohesion, and work for promoting the common good of society, and much of this can be accomplished through the practice of service. However, research shows that the values promoted by participation in service are lacking in society today.

A Decline in Values of Service and Community

According to Watts (2008), society today in the twenty first century is increasingly faced with a decline in community spirit, an increase in individualism, consumerism, greed, and a decline in shared values and other-centered behaviors. As community spirit declines, people are increasingly isolated from their neighbors at a considerable cost to their well-being and happiness. This decline in community spirit corresponds to a rise in individualism leading to "selfishness and insularity" (Grayling, 2008, p. 3). In his book, *Bowling Alone*, Putnam (2000) states that in the last 30–40 years there has been an increasing disconnect among family, friends,

neighbors, and social structures in American society. Based on his study of baby boomers, 53% thought their parents' generation was better in terms of "being concerned citizens, involved in helping others in the community," as compared with only 21% of baby boomers who thought their own generation was better. In the same study, 77% said that the nation was worse off due to less involvement in community activities. In 1992, three quarters of the U.S. workforce said that "the breakdown of community" and "selfishness" were serious or extremely serious problems in America (Putnam, 2000, p. 25)

In addition, consumerism and greed have created an excessive desire for money, property, and consumer goods leading to a decline in values and aspirations rooted in human relationships. A decline in shared values and other-centered consciousness has resulted in a lack of tolerance, honesty, compassion, respect, and reciprocity. For example, in Putnam's (2000) study, only 8% of all Americans said that "the honesty and integrity of the average American" (p. 25) were improving as compared with 50% who said we (Americans) were becoming less trust worthy.

The effects of these declining trends reach into the classroom as well. Research study by social scientists such as Delucchi and Korgen (2002) found that students displayed a "consumerist attitude" (p.104) towards education. Nordstrom, Bartels, and Bucy, (2009) stated that a consumer orientation toward education will be a significant predictor of uncivil and selfish classroom behaviors. They asserted that students with a consumer orientation display attitudes such as disrespect, disruption of class, and non-compliance. Students feel that the main purpose of education is economic (Flacks & Thomas, 1998), a means of increasing their earning potential rather than developing intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually to become better citizens and to

serve the common good of the people.

Further, Shachter and Seinfeld (1994) assert that the declining values of service and community contribute to the culture of violence in American society. Because of this "growing culture of violence" (NCCB, 2007, sec. 85, p. 25) reflected in its members' attitudes, belief systems, and coping styles of dealing with conflicts, the need for promoting a peaceful and harmonious community by upholding human values is necessary in society (Shachter & Seinfeld, 1994). Also, the sustainability of a healthy society depends upon individuals who are committed to learn and live by the value of serving others in the society. This is an important mission of Catholic school education, because Catholic schools have a specific moral purpose that is, to educate their students to learn and live by "Catholic values" (Martin & Litton, 2004, p. 22). Bryk, Lee, & Holland (1993) suggest that "school[s] must be a microcosm of the society –not as it is, but as it *should be* (p. 289). Thus, in a world where Catholic values are increasingly countercultural, Catholic schools must continue to create educational and service programs for their students to provide them the opportunities to grow in the Gospel values of love, compassion, honesty, sharing, justice, respect, and responsibility. This is what will sustain a society as healthy and harmonious. The U.S. Catholic Bishops (NCCB, 1973) affirmed this belief in their document *To Teach as Jesus Did*, "The commitment of Catholic schools to Christian values and Christian moral code renders a profound service to society which depends on spiritual values and good moral conduct for its very survival" (sec. 111, p. 31).

Therefore, today as the value for serving others erodes, it is important to understand how Catholic high school education impacts the formation of students in responding to social justice issues, especially in their solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, homeless, sick, exploited, and

marginalized. This research study attempted to capture the perceptions and voices of young adult alumnae who had experienced Catholic high school education, in order to understand their perspectives about the importance of service as well as their current engagement in it as they respond to social justice issues in American society. For the purpose of convenience, this study focused only on young adult alumnae from an all female Catholic high school setting, and did not focus on alumni/alumnae from all male or co-educational Catholic high school settings, nor did it focus on alumni/alumnae from Catholic elementary school settings.

Statement of the Problem

Research has shown that students are less concerned about values and more concerned about material success (Astin, Oseguera, Sax, & Korn, 2002; Pryor, Hurtado, Saenz, Santos, & Korn, 2007; Pryor, Hurtado, De Angeleo, Palucki Blake, & Tran, 2009). Research studies on *The American Freshman: Thirty-Five Year Trends, 1966–2001* by Astin et al., 2002, *Forty Year Trends, 1966–2006* by Pryor et al., 2007, and *The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2009* by Pryor et al., 2009, found that there has been a trend in the change of students' values over the past 35 to 40 years. The notable changes are in two contrasting value statements: The importance of "developing a meaningful philosophy of life" and of "being very well off financially" (Astin et al., 2002, p. 16; Pryor et al., 2007, p. 32; Pryor et al., 2009, p. 9). In 1967, 85.8% of the American college freshmen considered developing a meaningful philosophy of life as "very important" or "essential" compared to only 46.3% in 2006 who had a similar belief (Pryor et al., 2007, p. 33). This trend in change of values negatively impacts individuals from developing an attitude of respect and value for human persons, and encourages the growth of

selfishness and greed for material gain, thus promoting a disregard for service to the less-fortunate.

Further, research suggests that materialistic tendencies, disproportionately valuing ideals such as financial success, social recognition, and appealing appearances, are associated with reduced well-being (Kasser, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 2001). The higher levels of materialism among adolescents are associated with poorer school performance, fewer pro-social behaviors, and greater risky behavior engagement such as vandalism, school truancy, and possession of weapons (Cohen & Cohen, 1996; Faber & O'Guinn, 1992; Kasser, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 2001; Rindfleisch, Burroughs, & Denton, 1997; Williams, Cox, Hedberg, & Deci, 2000).

In addition, the growing decline in community spirit has resulted in increased individualism. People increasingly look after their own individual or family interests, and attribute less or no importance to the needs of the community (Watts, 2008). Preoccupation with "the self" is evident throughout American culture (Lasley, 1987). "Schools are often unwitting contributors to this self-centeredness. Teachers, principals, and a variety of significant others unknowingly foster behaviors that are antithetical to espoused social values" (Lasley, 1987, p. 674).

This individualism has contributed to the development of selfishness and greed. It is essential that individuals in a democratic society be able to redirect the drive to fulfill personal needs in order to serve the broader purposes of the community. The prime educational objective of Catholic high schools is to form students become "men-and-women-for-others" (Arrupe, 1973, p. 173) and "persons-in-community" (NCCB, 1973, sec. 13, p. 4) by fostering "skills, virtues, and habits of heart and mind" (NCCB, 1973, sec. 106, p. 30) in order to develop a sense

of "other-centered" attitudes and behaviors that will guide them towards developing an "ethic of caring" (Noddings, 2002) and a "habit of the heart" (Bellah, Tipton, Swidler, & Sullivan, 1985), a life style, that may lead them in serving the common good of the society.

Catholic high schools, as educational institutions, are committed to intentionally directing the growth of the whole person. It is essentially a fusion of faith and culture and a synthesis of faith and life (Massaro, 2000). This is the educational mission of the Catholic Church. The Church's social teaching principles serve as guiding principles to address societal issues, especially those related to social justice. However, the growing individualism, materialism, greed, and selfishness challenge Catholics, and the schools they support as to how they may effectively respond.

For this reason, this study has explored the impact of the Catholic school, in particular the Catholic high school Christian service program in alumnae's lives, and investigated the value of Catholic high school service experiences and their ability to counteract the harmful societal values of individualism, materialism, greed, selfishness, and thus help young adults engage in activities related to social justice and the common good.

Research Question

Two research questions that are related to each other were used. The first research question consisted of three questions which captured the community service experiences of young adult alumnae who attended Catholic high school. The second research question examined the relationship of these experiences to the alumnae's understanding of Catholic social teaching principles, and current engagement in social justice related activities.

Research Question 1:

- (a) What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current beliefs about service?
- (b) What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current engagement in service?
- (c) What is the level of actual service engagement of young adult alumnae who participated in a Christian service program at a Catholic female single sex high school?

Research Question 2: To what extent did young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school believe that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs about and current engagement with Catholic Social Teaching principles?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed methods research study was to investigate the perceived impact of the Catholic high school service experience in the lives of Catholic high school young adult alumnae concerning their perspective about the importance of service as well as the importance of Catholic social teaching principles related to social justice. A second purpose of this study was to investigate the level of young adult alumnae actual engagement in social justice related activities. This study focused exclusively on the Catholic high school population for two reasons. First, in general, students in high school age are developmentally prepared to engage in discussing and debating about abstract concepts (Piaget, 1970, as cited in McDevitt & Ormrod, 2007) such as human dignity, social justice, human rights, and solidarity which are very much part of service. The second reason was that the major infusion and integration of Catholic social teaching principles for many students in Catholic schools culminates in the Catholic high school.

Therefore it was important to study the Catholic high school population in order to investigate their perspectives about how high school service experience has taught them the importance of Catholic social teaching principles in their lives, and how it has impacted them to engage in service activities in their young adult life.

In attempting to examine the Catholic high school young adult alumnae perspectives about their Catholic high school service experiences and engagement in social justice issues, particularly in relation to their experience of Catholic social teaching principles, the researcher explored the perspectives of Catholic high school alumnae service experiences as they related to their perception and participation in social justice activities. The graduates' perspectives have provided opportunities for educational leaders to better understand if the Catholic mission of social justice is being lived out in the graduates' lives, and if the existing service programs offered in Catholic high schools are effective in helping them achieve this goal. This has created further possibilities of growth for all stakeholders in Catholic high schools.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it records the Catholic high school young adult alumnae's perspectives and voice about how their service experiences in high school impacted their adult life after high school. The research questions were formulated to provide insight and to focus the data collection to understand how Catholic high school service experiences impacted Catholic high school young adult alumnae's perspectives and their engagement in social justice related activities in the post high school period. This research study was also significant in capturing the voices of the female young adult alumnae from a Catholic high school which

provided research data that informs educators in Catholic high schools to understand the impact of their service related programs in place, and to redesign them if needed.

The method included both quantitative and qualitative research methods. While the quantitative method of survey was used to gain a broader perspective from many alumnae, the qualitative method of interview and document review were used to gain access to the deeper perspectives of students and hear their voices, which have to this point, been largely ignored.

Much research has been done on Catholic high school students' academic achievement (Altonji, Elder, & Taber, 2005a, 2005b; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Morgan, 2001;) career aspirations (Lent, Brown, Nota, & Soresi, 2003; Super, 1990); and social/emotional developments (Kelly-Stiles, 1999; Maher, 2007; Scott & Barona, 2011). Additionally, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) studies by Pryor, Hurtado, DeAngelo, Palucki Blake, and Tran (2009) relate, in general, college freshmen's volunteer aspirations to their high school volunteer experience. Further, Kuh and Gonyea (2006) relate student participation in religious and spiritual activities in secondary schools with their active engagement in academics throughout their postsecondary education. Further, Overstreet (2010) studied the trend of young adult Catholics separating spirituality from religion in their post secondary educational period. And Stewart (2002) studied with high school seniors about how Catholic high schools frame service-learning as the exercise of one's faith in benefit to marginalized groups. However, no research has been done to capture exclusively the perspectives of the young female adult alumnae who had graduated from Catholic high schools and had the time and the opportunity to engage in social justice issues in their adult lives. By researching the perspective and capturing the voices of young adult alumnae regarding their

experiences about Catholic social teaching principles during their Catholic high school service program experience, and the impact on their adult lives, this research study has served as a means to investigate the values and principles learned in Catholic high schools and thus reveal if student engagement in social justice activities in high school impacted adult experiences.

This study has also added to Catholic high school educators' attempt to effectively respond to the educational mission of the Church. Catholic schools act as social and cultural structures in the society. As such, Catholic schools play an important role in developing the common good for all of society (SCCE, 1997). The extent that Catholic schools succeed in their ministry has implications beyond the school. Investigating the Catholic high school young adult alumnae's experiences about the impact of service experiences and the Catholic social teaching principles embedded in them has been an opportunity to contribute to the purpose and justification for the future of Catholic high school service education.

Finally, this research study has provided information for Catholic high school educators and Catholic high school teacher preparatory programs to provide insight about what works, from the alumnae perspectives, in the implementation of service programs in Catholic high school education. This may assist in the creation of an educational climate for their students to learn to counteract individualism, materialism, and selfishness, and to make a stronger commitment to engage in social justice activities in American society.

Conceptual Framework

In order to understand the impact of the Catholic high school service programs on young adult alumnae from Catholic high schools, this research study used the conceptual frameworks derived from Catholic theology of the human person and Catholic social teachings.

Catholic Theology of the Human Person

Catholic theology of the human person refers to the teachings of the Catholic Church on the human person based on Christian Scriptures and Catholic sacred tradition, as interpreted by the Magisterium, the teaching office of the Catholic Church. Catholic theology considers human person as "the image of God" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [Catechism], 1994, sec. 355). "Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone" (Catechism, 1994, sec. 357). Mistreatment, exploitation, neglect, poverty, and indifference to human persons are considered injustices which offend the dignity of the human person. The teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospel informs the Catholic Church to teach counter to structures of injustices that threaten the dignity of the human person. The U.S. Catholic Bishops also confirm that the Gospel values inform the Catholic Church in its construction of social teachings and the importance of those values as a primary source for justice education. Pope Paul VI (1965) stated that the Gospel is the foundation for justice and the basis for the development of Catholic social thought. Writing his document *Gravissimum Educationis* in 1965, Pope Paul VI said that the importance of Catholic schools lies in their ability "to create for the school community a special atmosphere animated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity" (p. 12). Thus the integration of the Gospel value of justice in Catholic schools is meant to educate students to work for promoting justice for the poor and the underprivileged, not only here in the American society, but also in many other countries around the world. This study explored how, or, if students at Catholic high school are educated for this social mission through their engagement in service experiences. Catholic theology of the human person informs the Catholic Church in her construction of social teachings.

Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic social thought began as a combination of progressive and traditional thinking that initially sought a plan for a society that avoided the conflicting ideologies of capitalism and socialism (Mich, 1998). Catholic social teaching is a body of social teaching principles on various social concerns which are articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents (NCCB, 1998), which the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in their document *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions* (NCCB, 1998) have characterized in to seven major themes such as (a) life and dignity of the human person, (b) call to family, community and participation, (c) rights and responsibilities, (d) option for the poor and vulnerable, (e) the dignity of work and the rights of workers, (f) solidarity [and the common good], and (g) care for God's creation. The U.S. Bishops (NCCB, 1998) stated, "Catholic social teaching is a central and essential element of our faith" (p. 1), and as such, it is fundamental to the characteristics and activities of all Catholics and their educational institutions. There is nothing definitive about the listing of Catholic social teaching themes. Various authors have compiled differing lists. For example, Massaro (2000) in his book *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action* have compiled nine themes. Although the listings of the number of themes may differ, there is a general agreement about the basic items that belong on a list of the core Catholic social teaching principles which the U.S. Bishops (NCCB, 1998) have listed. For the purpose of this study, only four of the Catholic social teaching principles such as (a) life and dignity of the human person, (b) option for the poor and vulnerable, (c) solidarity and the common good, and (d) rights and responsibilities which are related to student service pedagogy in high school are included in this study. Although all seven principles could be touched upon in

high school Christian service education, these four principles are commonly referenced in service programs in Catholic high schools, and thus is the reason this study focused exclusively on these four principles.

The starting point of modern Catholic social thought began in 1848 with Father Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, a Roman Catholic priest in Berlin, Germany. He witnessed many social and economic injustices caused by the Industrial Revolution in Europe, namely the gross inequalities of wealth, unjust wages, the ravages of poverty, and violence (Mich, 1998). He called on the German Catholics to awaken their "social conscience" (p. 6) to address the social injustices surrounding them. His preaching and writing were sparks that ignited a modest, yet effective, movement in Europe known as the "Social Catholics" (p. 2), also known as "Social Catholicism" (p. 6). The social Catholics movement influenced the creation of another movement known as "Fribourg Union" (p. 9), a theological and moral think tank of concerned laity and clergy who "wrestled with the meaning of their faith tradition in light of the pressing social and economic problems of their day" (p. 10). While some thinkers in these movements favored economic liberty and supported "laissez-faire capitalism" (p.10), others argued against it. Thus, they sought a plan for a society that avoided the two conflicting ideologies of capitalism and socialism, and favored "Social Catholicism" (p. 6). The social Catholics impacted directly the writing of the first social justice encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (The Condition of Labor) by Pope Leo XIII in 1891.

"*Rerum Noavarum* (The Condition of Labor) is the starting point of an important, indeed precious, tradition of Catholic social thought" (Coleman, 1991, p. 3). In this encyclical, Pope Leo XIII (1891) condemned Marxist socialism and defended workers' rights to a just wage. Since

then, many social encyclicals were written as a response of the Catholic Church to various social concerns. For example, Pius XI (1931) wrote *Quadragesimo Anno* (The reconstruction of the social order) to address the unemployment and destitution caused by the world wide economic crisis and depression, and emphasized the common good of the society. Further, Pope John XXIII (1963) wrote *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) to plead for peace and disarmament in the wake of Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, and Pope Paul VI (1967) wrote *Popolorum Progressio* (The development of people) to address the widening gap between rich and poor nations. Additionally, Pope John Paul II (1981) wrote *Laborem Exercens* (On human work) to express concern about the capitalism and communism treating workers as mere instruments of production, and emphasized the dignity of the human labor. And the world Synod of Bishops created *Justitia in Mundo* (Justice in the world) in 1971 to address structural injustices and oppression in the world. More recently, the U.S. bishops wrote *Economic Justice for All* (NCCB, 1986) in 1986 to affirm that justice demands active participation in economic, political, and cultural life of the society. Shifting from "charity to advocacy" (Mich, 1998, p. 333), the U.S. bishops called for the transformation of socially unjust structures in the American society. In California, the California Catholic Bishops Conference (2011) recently addressed the state budgetary crisis in their statement "*In Search of the Common Good: A Moral Framework for Addressing California's Budget Crisis*" calling the political leaders to a moral frame of reference for their debate on the state budget, namely the dignity of the human person, the pursuit of the common good, the principle of subsidiarity, and the principle of solidarity (California Catholic Conference, 2011). Thus these papal, conciliar, and bishops' documents continue to reflect and

address various social justice concerns in the world, particularly in American society, demanding the attention, commitment, and action of the Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

The Catholic Church, historically wrestled with many social issues such as war, wealth, and the use of worldly power as it spread in to the Greco-Roman world (Mich, 1998). While there is much to explore about the Church's position on social issues in ancient, medieval and up to 18th century, the modern and post modern period holds greatest interest for us today because "it reveals the church coming to grips with the challenges of industrial capitalism" (p. 2) such as unjust wages, poor working condition, human trafficking, exploitation, and greed for capital gain over welfare of the human person. The Catholic Church is still responding to these challenges together with other social justice concerns in today's world.

The above discussed conceptual frameworks of Catholic theology of the human person and Catholic social teaching are appropriate to use in this study because they both emphasize the importance of the human person, the primacy of human wellbeing over capital gain, the mandate to serve the poor and vulnerable, a commitment to solidarity with suffering people, community cohesion, and the importance of promoting social justice. Catholic schools are meant to foster these principles in their students through academic, service, and religious activities. This study explored if students at Catholic high schools were impacted by their service experiences to give importance to human persons, to serve them in society, and become "men-and-women-for-others" (Arrupe, 1973, p. 173) rather than becoming self-centered individuals.

Methodology

This study used a mixed methods research design. The qualitative data were

collected through semi-structured individual interviews and document reviews. The quantitative data were collected through survey. Both methods attempted to capture the impact of service experiences relating to Catholic social teaching principles on young adult alumnae from a Catholic female high school.

While the quantitative survey method generated important data in this study, it did not fully capture the experiences and the voices of students in their natural settings by its narrowly defined and inherently artificial contexts (Hatch, 2002, p. 7). Qualitative research attempted to understand how individuals make decisions on what was happening to them in their lives. It tried to capture the perspectives individuals had as the basis for their actions in specific social settings. These perspectives or the meaning participants constructed were captured best by a qualitative research method such as interviews.

The data collection took place by contacting the young adult alumnae who graduated from 1998 to 2005, and whose ages ranged mostly 23 to 30 from a female single sex Catholic high school alumnae association in a large urban area in the Western United States. The data collection took place in three phases.

In phase one, the researcher conducted an online survey. The researcher sent out the survey web-link through an alumnae e-mail list maintained at the Catholic high school alumnae association, as well as utilized the school website and social net work such as face-book in order to capture young adults' beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and demographic compositions. The survey consisted of structured items such as individuals' demographic information, a five point Likert scale with questions ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," and unstructured questions such as free text response questions. The quantitative data from the survey were

evaluated using a simple frequency analysis. The qualitative data from the survey's free response questions were transcribed and coded.

The second phase involved conducting a semi-structured interview with nine participants from those who took the survey. The interview questions for the individual interview consisted of specific and open-ended questions, followed by probing questions as was needed in order to help the participants to express their in-depth perspectives and experiences with their Catholic high school service education. The response data collected from interviews were transcribed, and thematically clustered and coded by using codes such as BV for beliefs and values, LD for life and dignity of the human person, CE for current service engagement and so on.

The third phase involved reviewing school documents dating to the period from 1998 to 2005 such as the school year books, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) documents, and Parent and Student Handbooks to explore what kind of service activities the school had provided during the participants' attendance. The data gathered from the document review were categorized relating to various service opportunities students received, and coded using codes such as SA-LD for student activity for life and dignity of the human person, STP for student policies and so on.

The triangulation of data took place by relating, comparing, and contrasting the data from the survey, interview, and document review. This comparison process of analysis (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) helped the researcher to identify the impact of Catholic high school service program upon the young adult alumnae. Conclusions were drawn and the implications for the Catholic schools have been discussed.

Limitations

This research study investigated the young adult alumnae's perceptions of their service experiences in Catholic high school and their current engagement in social justice activities. Since they have already graduated from high school some years ago and have moved on to undertake either higher studies or jobs, their concept of social justice and perception of certain values may have added influence from sources other than their high school service experiences. Further, the use of a small sample size in this study limited the generalization of its findings to a larger population. Moreover, the findings of this study lack generalizability to an all boys', or co-educational Catholic high school, or other schools, which are significantly dissimilar from the all female single sex school in this research study.

In addition, the researcher's role as a Catholic priest is a limitation to a certain extent that the participants may have perceived the researcher as a priest rather than as a researcher. It could have obscured responses, preventing participants from disclosing their true and realistic experiences, especially the unpleasant ones.

Definition of Relevant Terms

Altruism: Altruism is defined as “behavior such as helping or sharing that promotes the welfare of others without conscious regard for one’s own self interest” (Hoffman, 1979, p. 2); an inner tendency of a group or an individual, focused on giving meaningful service(s) to other person/s (Smith, 2000).

Catholic Social Teaching: "Sum total of lessons from scripture...papal encyclicals and other Vatican writings, documents prepared by Church Commissions, and letters from national

conferences of bishops as applied to social concerns" (Klein & Laczniak, 2009, p. 2).

Catholic Theology of the Human Person: Catholic theology of the human person is the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on her understanding of the human person as created in the image of God, based on Christian Scriptures and Sacred Tradition, possessing natural dignity, and being called to enter in communion with God and other human persons (Catechism, sec. 357).

Common Good: The Common Good is defined as "some total of those conditions of social living whereby men [and women] are enabled more fully and more readily to achieve their own perfection" (Pope John XXIII, 1961, sec. 65). Jones and Waller (2010) define it as "the mutually shared responsibility of all individuals to corporately realize society's full human potential as individuals and as a unified society" (p. 288).

Community Service: The service rendered to the community but without the tie in to academic goals or curricular programming (Bickett, 2008).

Christian Service: The service rendered to individuals or community based on the belief in the Gospel principles as well as on the Catholic vision of life and values (Engebretson, 2009).

Magisterium: Magisterium refers to the pastoral teaching authority of the Church (Sullivan, 1983), embodied in the episcopacy, which is the aggregation of the current bishops of the Church, led by the Bishop of Rome (the Pope), who has authority over the bishops, individually and as a body, as well as over each and every Catholic directly.

Materialism: Materialism is the belief that an individual's material/worldly possessions are the greatest source of life satisfaction (Belk, 1985; as cited in Auerbach et al., 2010, p. 117).

Millennial Generation: The millennial generation is variously known in the literature as Generation Y, Millennial Generation, Net Generation, Echo-Boomers, Google Generation, or the Nexters, and include individuals born approximately between 1980 -2001 (Sherman, 2009; Stewart, 2009).

Religiousness: The degree to which one attends religious services, prays, discusses religion with friends and family, participates in religious groups, clubs and organizations, and follows religious teaching in everyday life (Astin, A. W., Astin, H. S., Lindholm, & Bryant, 2004; Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003).

Religious Commitment: Religious commitment is defined as the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living (Worthington, 1998).

Sacred Scriptures: Sacred Scriptures refers to the *Holy Bible*, which includes the old and new testaments.

Sacred Tradition: Sacred Tradition is a theological term used to refer to the handing on the teachings of Scripture. The teachings of Scripture are written down in the Bible, and are handed not only in writing, but also in the lives of those who lived according to its teachings. These Sacred Traditions form the fundamental basis of church authority.

Selfishness: Selfishness is defined as “an individual’s concern solely for his or her own personal welfare without including the welfare of others, or as behavior that indicates a lack of concern for the welfare of others” (Jencks, 1990; as cited in Farrugia, 2002, p. 119).

Social Justice: Social justice is what individuals do by themselves as well as with other persons in the society to promote fairness for the sake of the common good of the people (Heft, 2006).

Social Capital: Social capital is defined as the "relationships and building bonds of trust between people" (Smith, J. D. 2003, p. 51).

Social Catholics: Catholic clergy and lay people movement in Europe during 18th century, who promoted the awareness of "social conscience" (Mich, 1998, p. 6) among people to address the social injustices surrounding them.

Solidarity: "Solidarity is that common bond of humanity that binds us to one another when we recognize that we are one human family" (Connell & Connors, 2009, p. 52).

Volunteerism: Volunteerism is defined as, "Giving time, energies, or talents to any individual or group for which [the individual] is not paid" (Safrit, King, & Burcsu, 1994, p. 7). Musick and Wilson (2008) define volunteer work as "unpaid effort provided to parties to whom the worker owes no contractual, familiar, or friendship obligation" (p. 5).

Summary

American society is experiencing increased individualism, materialism, and lack of shared common values. This calls for the educators in Catholic schools to give more importance to the other-centered development of the student population in an effort to offer them holistic formation, and increase their awareness of the need for a commitment to service and social justice. Chapter 1 has outlined briefly the problem and the purpose of the study. Chapter 2 provides a synthesis and analysis of relevant research, theory, and literature. Chapter 3 outlines the details of the methodology that were utilized in this study. The qualitative method of semi-structured interview, document review, and the quantitative method of survey questionnaire provided the framework for data gathering. Chapter 4 presents the data and findings of the research. Catholic social teaching principles served as the lens to analyze and interpret the data.

Finally, the study concludes in Chapter 5 with recommendations for Catholic educational leaders, and a discussion regarding the implications for the Catholic schools, for students, and for the society at large.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Communities are weak, families are divided, and individuals are increasingly isolated from their neighbors at a considerable cost to their well-being and happiness (Rochester, Paine, & Howlett, 2010). The decline in family, neighborhood, and community ties have been associated with a rising tide of individualism (Rochester et al., 2010). Preoccupation with self is evident throughout American culture (Lasley, 1987) as well as in other nations. Among the individuals in UK, the recent trend is to "look after ourselves" rather than "look after the community's interest" (Carnegie UK Trust, 2007, p. 17). People tend to see themselves as individuals and not as part of a wider society, leading to individualism and selfishness. Rising individualism has been accompanied and fuelled by the growth of consumerism (Rochester et al., 2010). Excessive desire for money and consumer goods has eclipsed values and aspirations rooted in personal, family, and community relationships (Watts, 2008). There is considerable decrease in a set of shared values such as tolerance, compassion, and respect to guide the actions and behaviors of the people towards caring for one another in the American society. This literature review begins by looking at the trends in the American society related to the decline in shared values, and the increase in materialism, individualism, and selfishness. Second, the Catholic faith tradition and the Catholic social teachings are explored as a response to these trends. Third, Catholic high school education, particularly the social justice orientation as implemented in Christian service programs are discussed. Finally, the long term impacts of Catholic high school Christian service education for social justice are explored.

Increase in Materialism

Studies on *The American Freshman: Thirty-Five Year Trends, 1966–2001* by Astin, Oseguera, Sax, and Korn (2002), *Forty Year Trends, 1966–2006* by Pryor, Hurtado, Saenz, Santos, and Korn (2007), and *The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2009* by Pryor, Hurtado, De Angeleo, Palucki Blake, and Tran (2009) found that there has been a trend in the change of students' values over the past 35 to 40 years. The notable changes are in two contrasting value statements: the importance of "developing a meaningful philosophy of life" and of "being very well off financially" (Astin et al., 2002, p. 16; Pryor et al., 2007, p. 32; Pryor et al., 2009, p. 9). In the late 1960s, developing a meaningful philosophy of life was the top value being considered as an "essential" or "very important" goal by more than 80% of the American college freshman. On the other hand, being secure financially was considered less important in 1960s (Astin et al., 2002; Pryor et al., 2007), ranking fifth or sixth on the list with less than 45% of the college freshmen endorsing it as an important goal in life. However, since that time these two values have traded places. Being successful financially was considered a top value by 78.1% in 2009, and developing a meaningful philosophy of life ranked much lower at only 42.9% in 2009. These contrasting trends began in the early 1970s and reached their opposite extremes in the late 1980s. Since then there has been a continued increase in the "well off financially" value for entering college freshmen and decrease in the "philosophy of life" value. Pryor et al. (2007) suggest that "Materialism might be involved in the desire to be financially well off..." (p. 32). Further, the college freshmen in the 21st century consider that "the chief benefit of a college education is to increase one's earning power" (Astin et al., 2002, p. 17) a value which rose from 47.3% to 67.4 % between 1969 and 1989. In addition, the value of attending college to be "able

to make more money” increased from 44.6% to 71.4 % between 1971 and 1991, and remained at 69.0% in 2006. These trends reflect an increase in materialistic values in those who will soon be society's leaders (Astin et al., 2002). The next cohorts of society's leaders will emerge from the Millennial generation who will assume various leadership roles in society since the Baby Boomers, who were born between 1947-1964, will soon retire in American society (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Because they are soon to be society's leaders, and because they are the participants in my study, it is appropriate to now explore the millennial generation.

The Millennial Generation

The Millennial generation is variously known in the literature as Generation Y, Millennial Generation, Net Generation, Echo-Boomers, Google Generation, or the Nexters, and includes individuals born approximately between 1980 -2001 (Stewart, 2009; Sherman, 2009). For the purpose of this study the most commonly used term "Millennial" is used to identify the population in this study.

Research has been done with the Millennial generation who were born between the years 1983 -1992 by Oblinger and Oblinger (2005), between the years 1981-1999 by Lancaster and Stillman (2003), and between the years 1979-1994 by Smola and Sutton (2002). As a result, depending on the source referenced, the age of Millennials in 2011 could be as old as 33 and as young as 9 (Grant, 2008; Halstead & Hesser, 2005; Henchey, 2005; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Rothwell, 2008) which includes the age range of 23-30 for the population in this study.

Research has indicated that Millennial students coming to college have certain characteristics (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Newton, 2000; Sax 2003; Schneider & Stevenson, 1999; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Howe and Strauss (2000)

identified seven characteristics of Millennial students. According to the researchers, Millennial students feel they are special, have been sheltered, are team oriented, exhibit confidence and optimism, are pressured to excel at their best, have a strong desire to achieve, are peace keepers, and are accepting others from varied cultural backgrounds (Howe & Strauss, 1993). Twenge and Campbell (2001) also pointed out self-esteem and assertiveness as positive traits. Others have characterized Millennials as technology savvy, socially networked, and interested in addressing social problems (Feiertag & Berge, 2008; Gordon, 2010; Hill, 2004; McCafferty, 2003). Further, the Millennial generation tend to look for work that is meaningful and fulfilling (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Yang & Guy, 2006). They look for a company's values and mission and want to work in those firms that provide an environment which helps them lead a more purposeful and meaningful life over financial gains (Corporate Leadership Council, 2005). A study conducted by Price Waterhouse Coopers (2008) found that corporate social responsibility is critical to Millennials and a great majority (88%) indicated that they will seek an employer whose related values match their own.

However, the Millennial generation pose many challenges as well. Barnds (2009) and Grant (2008) describe Millennials as individuals who possess a higher degree of loyalty to their personal lives than their employer, and who also expect instant gratification. Schneider and Stevenson (1999) found Millennial teenagers tended to have high ambitions but no clear life plan; they have been so protected that many of them have become directionless dreamers. Further, Millennial students have an increased narcissism and a sense of entitlement (Twenge, 2006; Twenge & Campbell, 2009). In a study comparing 2004-08 undergraduate and graduate students with one another, Stewart and Bernhardt (2010) found it consistent with the view of

Twenge and Campbell (2009). Narcissism is characterized as a personality disorder that involves grandiose views of self, an inflated sense of entitlement, and exploitative attitudes towards others (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). In a study with American college students who completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory between 1987 and 2006, Twenge (2006) found that the average college students in 2006 scored higher in narcissism than 65% of students just nineteen years before in 1987. Twenge (2006) argues that the data from college student samples that were made up almost exclusively of Millennials in 2004-2006 show that college students are the most narcissistic group of all, and they are not as "other-focused and group oriented" (p. 69) as Howe and Strauss (2000) define them. In contrast, "far from being altruistic and focused on others, the Millennials are the most narcissistic generation in history" (Twenge, 2006, p. 70).

Narcissistic attitudes and behaviors favor "short-term pleasures at the expense of long-term gains" (Twenge & Campbell, 2009, p. 135). The views of Twenge and Campbell (2009) suggest Millennials' commitment to social justice is also a short term aspiration rather than a long term goal. For example, Mahatma Gandhi was engaged from 1915-1947 to obtain justice and freedom for the people of India from the British colonial rule (Brown & Parel, 2011). And Martin Luther King, Jr., the social activist, led the civil rights movement in the United States from the mid-1950s until his death by assassination in 1968 (Kirk, 2005). Although not all social justice oriented activities may need the similar amount of time utilized by Gandhi and King, social justice engagement in general, is not a short term commitment; it is rather a long term, or even a life-long commitment. Thus, the narcissistic tendency of individuals such as Millennials may predispose them to avoid the long term engagement in social justice activities, in favor of the instant gratification of other endeavors.

Millennials and Service

Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000) stated that Millennials students have tendency to believe in community service as long as they are recognized, or get credit for it. They have become used to receiving rewards for service in high school and tend to carry this expectation into college (Sax, 2003). Although such strategies as providing a stipend for students assuming leadership roles for service, or academic credit for groups of students who engage in service learning projects might be justified and are an inherent part of the Millennial mind-set, they tend to encourage compliance rather than commitment (Sax, 2000). Students may fulfill the service activities for the sake of the rewards which are short lived rather than developing genuine empathy and love for the less fortunate which may foster a long term commitment to serve them. Thus, the view of Sax (2000) suggests that engagement in social justice requires commitment rather than compliance.

Researchers such as DeBard (2004) argued that the Millennial generation is less committed to working on important issues such as environment and race relations, suggesting that they lack commitment to personally get involved with the broader perspective of social justice. In a survey with Millennial students, Gaudelli (2009) found 69% of the respondents expressed a genuine interest in service to protecting the environment, but admitted to a lack of personal involvement in green-related activities. However, other researchers such as Sax (2003), using the data from the Cooperative Institutional Review Program (CIRP), asserted that the college freshmen in recent years are more service oriented as compared to students five or six years ago. Another researcher Kelly (2010) argued that Millennial cohort is "a socially conscious group that wants to be involved in making difference in society" (p. 48). Howe & Strauss (2007)

stated that more than any other group, this generation will embrace community projects and service learning opportunities, and benefit from a net work of social relations which would increase their social capital.

It is the role of the educators to embrace this strength and provide ample opportunities for their students to develop and grow in service. Catholic high school service programs attempt to do this but must be cognizant of the characteristics of Millennials, and need to develop or redesign their service related pedagogical approaches to help students alter their self-centered beliefs, goals, attitudes, and narcissistic behaviors, and strengthen their social capital in order to foster a service oriented life style (Stewart & Bernhardt, 2010). Catholic educators must develop plans on how their current service related pedagogical practices could better meet the needs of the Millennial generation and strengthen their social capital.

Social Capital

Robert Putnam (2000), professor of public policy at Harvard University, published his work *Bowling Alone*, based on his extensive research of America's civic decline. His findings indicate that over the last 30-40 years there has been a increasing disconnect among family, friends, neighbors, and social structures. The title of the book *Bowling Alone* refers to the decline of bowling leagues in the United States of America, and illustrates his theory that people today are bowling, but bowling leagues have almost disappeared. People are increasingly engaged in isolated and self centered activities and behaviors, and are losing the sense of social connectedness that is foundational for engaging in social justice issues and activities in the society. Putnam (2000) further states that the concern about the changing character of American society has been understood by social scientists as the loss of individuals' social capital in our

society. In recent years social scientists have framed concerns about the changing character of American society in terms of the concept of social capital.

Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called civic virtue. . . [However] A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital. (Putnam, 2000, p. 19)

Social capital is defined as the "relationships and building bonds of trust between people" (Smith J. D., 2003, p. 51) which includes norms of reciprocity, mutual obligation, and cooperation for mutual benefit (Coleman, 1988, 1990; Putnam, 2000). Putnam (2000) argues that social bonds are a powerful predictor of life satisfaction, and the loss of social capital has profound effects. For example, communities with less social capital have lower educational performance, more teen pregnancy, increased child suicide, higher crime rates, lower voting rates, and the loss of other neighborhood quality of life indicators (Putnam, 2000). On the other hand research studies also indicate that an increase in social capital is related to improved individual well-being and greater collective action (John, 2005), better civic engagement (Harris, 1998; Perks, 2007), better academic performance (Smith, 1999; Steinberg, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1996), a decrease in crime (Adaman & Carkoglu, 2003; McNeal, 1999; McNulty & Bellair, 2003; Salmi & Kivivuori, 2006; Wright & Fitzpatrick, 2006; Wright, Cullen, & Miller, 2001), and lower rates of alcohol abuse (Weitzman & Chen, 2005; Weitzman & Kawachi, 2000).

According to Putnam (2000), one hundred years ago the United States faced a decline in

social networks, but found ways to correct itself through the formation of new social structures that built social capital. Citing the growth of service organizations such as the Red Cross, Boy Scouts, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and Urban League, he argues that most of these organizations had a very strong or predominately volunteer emphasis, and they built social capital because there was a strong emphasis on service to the community. Today, that emphasis on service has changed with a shift to increased self centered individual gains rather than service to the community. The Catholic faith tradition offers ways to counter this trend in American society.

Catholic Faith Tradition

In a study of altruism in contemporary America, Tom Smith (2003) concluded that people who had frequent religious involvement such as attending religious activities, service learning programs, and other service and sacramental activities, associated themselves with greater empathy and more altruistic values than those who had no or less religious involvement. Putnam and Campbell (2010) also stated that religiosity predicts many sorts of altruism.

Charity and Justice

Altruism is defined as values/preferences and behaviors "motivated mainly out of a consideration of another's needs rather than one's own" (Piliavin & Charng, 1990, p. 30). Hoffman (1979) defined it as "behavior such as helping or sharing that promotes the welfare of others without conscious regard for one's own self interest" (p. 2). In the Catholic faith tradition altruism is understood as loving the other person as Jesus did, especially the poor, the unfortunate, and the marginalized. This love is concretely expressed through service experiences and service learning (Fourré, Fulay, Iwanski, & Petitfils, 2007). Service experience activities

such as collections and fund drives, and volunteering activities such as visits to nursing homes, and helping at a soup kitchen can provide opportunities for students for doing service as a sign of charity. Service learning, on the other hand, involves integrating service with structured reflections on the meaning of Scriptures and Catholic principles related to social justice (Fourré et al., 2007). The shift here is from charity to justice. Heft (2006) called it as "faith that does justice" (p. 10). Fourré et al. (2007) stated that the Catholic vision of social justice embraces the need for both charity and justice:

Charity—a direct response to immediate needs—is critical in the face of hunger, homelessness, and illness. Action for justice—work to change the structures that allow people to be hungry, homeless, and without access to education and health care—is necessary to prevent those sources of suffering from becoming ever more potent forces in our world. (p. 41)

Thus, charity and justice complement each other, and in practice are “identical” (Arrupe, 1973, p. 178). "Without charity, people will die of hunger and disease today. Without action for justice, people will continue to be at risk tomorrow" (Fourré et al., 2007, p. 42). Catholic educational institutions, as formative vehicles, can help students to learn the relationship between faith and social justice, and help them to understand the importance of sharing that promotes the welfare of others without conscious regard for one's own self interest.

In His radical teaching, Jesus of Nazareth taught His followers to show love, compassion, and empathy for the sick, poor, neglected, and downtrodden. These teachings are clearly an invitation for the listeners to develop other-centered attitudes and behaviors. Christian service education and volunteerism nurtures these other-centered attitudes and behaviors. The Catholic

Church continues to follow this mandate in her faith life as well as in her educational mission.

Catholic Church's Teachings on Social Justice

According to Heft (2006), justice in general is understood as "giving a person his or her due" (p. 15). He states that justice requires fairness. The adjective "social" introduces the application of justice to more than one person, typically to whole group and society. Hence, social justice is what individuals do by themselves as well as with other persons in the society to promote fairness for the sake of the common good of the people as Heft (2006) asserts, "Justice is intrinsically social" (p. 16). In this sense, social justice draws upon several key concepts of Catholic social teaching on various social concerns which are articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents (NCCB, 1998). The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB, 1998) have characterized them in to seven major themes such as (a) life and dignity of the human person, (b) call to family, community and participation, (c) rights and responsibilities, (d) option for the poor and vulnerable, (e) the dignity of work and the rights of workers, (f) solidarity [and the common good], and (g) care for God's creation. Encyclicals by various Popes, and pastoral letters by Bishops' Conferences have affirmed this perspective of social justice. For the purpose of this study, only four of the Catholic social teaching principles such as (a) life and dignity of the human person, (b) option for the poor and vulnerable, (c) solidarity and the common good, and (d) rights and responsibilities which are related to student service pedagogy in high school are included in this study. Although service pedagogy in high school may touch upon all seven principles, this study focused exclusively on these four principles. The Catholic Church's teachings on social justice are foundational to any discussion of service, particularly relating to these four principles which are explored in detail below.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The Catholic faith tradition asserts that the human person is created in the image of God and as such every person is worthy of love and dignity. The book of Genesis states, "God created man in His image; in the divine image He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1: 27, *The New American Bible*, 1987, p. 9). The U.S. Catholic bishops in their statement on *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions* (NCCB, 1998) stated, "Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family" (p. 1). Again, the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1990) in another document, *A century of social teaching: A common heritage and continuing challenge* stated:

In the Catholic social vision, the human person is central, the clearest reflection of God among us. Each person possesses a basic dignity that comes from God, not from any quality or accomplishment, or from race or gender, age or economic status. The test of every institution or policy is whether it enhances or threatens human life and human dignity. We believe people are more important than things. (sec. 4)

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) also states, "Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature..." (sec. 1930). Thus the Church considers that every person, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, economic or social status, or any other differentiating characteristics, has inherent dignity and is worthy of love and respect. To nurture, promote, and safeguard this human dignity at all aspects of human life is central to the social teaching mission of the Catholic Church and its educational institutions.

This belief in the sanctity and infinite value of human life has led the Catholic Church to oppose various threats to human life, such as abortion, euthanasia, and capital punishment. Late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago frequently wrote and spoke about "a consistent ethic of life" (Massaro, 2000, p. 116), calling the American people to develop an attitude of profound respect for the sanctity of human life at every moment of its duration.

Preferential Option For and With the Poor

Catholic social teaching calls for a commitment to give special attention to care for the poor, weak, and vulnerable. The Church draws its inspiration from Jesus Christ who had a special love and commitment, in word and deed, for the well-being of the least fortunate ones. The Second Vatican Council document *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) promulgated by Pope Paul VI (1965) affirms this: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men [and women] of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ" (sec. 1). Pope Paul VI in his apostolic letter, *Octogesima Adveniens* (A Call to Action) in 1971 called for the preferential respect due to the poor. "The Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due to the poor and the special situation they have in our society: the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of the poor " (Pope Paul VI, 1971, sec. 23). In their meeting at Puebla, Mexico in 1979, the Catholic Bishop Conference of Latin America came up with this notion of "preferential option for the poor" to address the growing disparity between the rich and the poor in Latin America, and the Church's commitment to address the plight of the poor. In *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* (The Concern of the Church for Social Order), Pope John Paul II (1987) raised the

concerns about the growing gap between the rich and the poor nations frequently contrasting the superabundance enjoyed by a few with the desperate struggle for survival experienced by so many. He identified "structures of evil" (Massaro, 2000, p. 148) such as international debt, the arms race, and a form of economic domination termed as neo-colonialism contributing to unemployment, housing crisis, illiteracy, and poor health care.

Pope John Paul II attributed many of the global problems to two basic social evils: "the all consuming desire for profit" and the "thirst for power" (Massaro, 2000, p. 148). These two evils represent the greedy nature of materialism and the selfish nature of control and domination over others. This is similar to the findings of HERI study by Astin et al. (2002), Pryor et al. (2007), and Pryor et al. (2009) that the trend in the change of students' values over the past 35 to 40 years from the importance of "developing a meaningful philosophy of life" to "being very well off financially" may be attributed to the materialistic attitude stated by Pope John Paul II, and the self-centered behaviors of American population as identified by Putnam (2000). The late holy father Pope John Paul II also reminded the world that the root of social sin [evil] is always in personal sin [evil] and the evil choices of individuals, which comes before the spread of evil to larger social institutions and practices (Massaro, 2000). Paying attention to the evil desires, attitudes, and practices of individuals and social structures, and working towards transforming them is doing justice for the well-being of the poor and the disadvantaged. These and other Catholic social teachings are important faith based values that the Catholic Church espouses, and students can learn about through their Catholic high school service experience.

Solidarity and the Common Good

"Solidarity begins as an inner attitude and when it has fully taken root within us,

expresses itself through numerous external activities that demonstrate our commitment to the well-being of others" (Massaro, 2000, p. 121). Solidarity calls our attention to the fact that we are interdependent for our biological, social, and psychological needs. We can realize our full potential and appreciate the full meaning of our human dignity when we "share our lives with others and co-operate on projects that hold the promise of mutual benefit" (Massaro, 2000, p. 120). Pope John Paul II, in his encyclicals *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work, 1981), *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* (On Social Concern, 1987), and *Centesimus Annus* (On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum, 1991), repeatedly calls solidarity an essential virtue of social life. He argues that God not only allows us to depend upon each other but absolutely wills us to share ourselves in the context of intimate as well as larger groupings of our neighbors. "To be human is to be a social being, one whose very life is and should be bound up with those around us" (Massaro, 2000, p. 121). We are one human family despite our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. In this regard, the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1990) asserted that "We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers" (sec. 7), and that "the ultimate injustice is for a person or group to be treated actively or abandoned passively as if they were nonmembers of the human race" (NCCB, 1986, sec. 77). Thus the Catholic Church has taught her followers to be in solidarity with one another locally and globally irrespective of differences in race, ethnicity, ideology, religion, culture, and achievements. She has called the people to live in peace and harmony with one another.

Honoring the common good is an important aspect of human social life. Pope John XXIII (1961) in his encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (Christianity and Social Progress) defines common good as "the sum total of those conditions of social living where by men [and women] are

enabled more fully and more readily to achieve their own perfection" (sec. 65). He further states that we all have a moral responsibility to promote the common good by making whatever contributions are needed to improve the lives of others. It is a call to reach out to others' needs either individually or collectively. It is the other-centered philosophy of life, as opposed to self-centered ideology, that makes a person to respond to the needs of the individuals and the community. Catholic high schools hope to foster an environment for students to develop this other-centered philosophy of life through service programs. Catholic high schools desire that their graduating students carry this foundation with them as they make their transition in to their adult life. As young adult alumnae from Catholic school, it is the hope of the Catholic schools that they continue to develop and affirm the other-centered philosophy of life by volunteering to serve the needy, and to fight for their common good when justice is denied.

Rights and Responsibilities

Humans also have a fundamental right to life and to those things that make life truly human: food, clothing, housing, health care, education, security, social services, and employment (NCCB, 1990, sec. 5). Pope John XXIII in his encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) in 1963, affirmed the rights of every human person as "universal, inviolable, and inalienable" (Massaro, 2000, p. 118). The world leaders also recognized the rights of every human person and declared the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in their United Nations General Assembly in 1948. The Catholic Church's claim of human rights is distinctive because her justification is grounded on a theological framework in which God, as our creator, is the ultimate source of our rights. We, as created persons, enter in to a web of relationships that connect us with God, other persons, governments and local communities, and the natural environment. In this web of

relationships we affirm our individual rights and well-being as well as take moral responsibility to respect and promote the rights and well-being of others. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1990) affirmed this understanding when they stated, "corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and to the larger society, to respect the rights of others and to work for the common good" (sec. 5). This is in conformity with the principle of Catholic social teaching as well as fundamental to the characteristics of being Catholics and non-Catholics alike in order to promote the well-being of people and society.

The rights and responsibilities of individuals are also extended to property ownership as well. This Catholic social teaching affirms the basic right to private ownership of property, but not at the expense of ignoring the needs of less-fortunate people. "To ignore the needs of our less-fortunate neighbors, whether out of selfish motives or mere neglect, is to frustrate the very purpose of God in creating the material world we share" (Massaro, 2000, p. 133). Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (The Development of People, 1967) reminds us that "...private property does not constitute for any one an absolute and unconditional right. No one is justified for keeping his [or her] exclusive use what he [or she] does not need, when others lack necessities" (sec. 23). Emphasizing the social dimension of the property one holds, Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* (On Social Concern, 1987) wrote that "...the goods of this world are equally meant for all. The right to private property is valid and necessary but it does not nullify the value of this principle. Private property, in fact, is under a social mortgage" (sec. 42). The concept of social mortgage suggests that we cannot really say that we are the final owners of the material things that are created by God. We are God's handiwork to hold it temporarily. As long as we remain God's handiwork, our holding of property is strictly

conditioned on fulfilling our social obligation to the rest of God's creatures, especially the needs of the less fortunate people (Massaro, 2000). Thus this principle reminds every human person about the social obligation one has for the wealth one possesses. It is an invitation for everyone to reject selfishness and greed, and to develop an attitude of generosity to share what one has with those who are in desperate need. Catholic high schools attempt to help students understand the relationship of their rights and responsibilities to others, including the importance of food, clothing, housing, healthcare, education, security, social services, and employment for those who are in need. This attitude of generosity that may be fostered through Catholic high school service programs may continue to impact students during their young adult life.

Implications of Catholic Social Teaching for Catholic High Schools

The social justice dimensions of the Catholic faith tradition are an essential part of Catholic identity and formation (NCCB, 1998). Catholic high schools, as an "educational and formational vehicle dedicated to social justice" (Katz, 2002, p. 7) are vitally important for sharing and perpetuating the substance and values of Catholic social teachings to students. It is the goal of Catholic education to prepare students to promote justice by advocating against discrimination and unfair barriers to human progress. They are taught to work towards fostering an authentic human development by advocating socially responsible policies.

Catholic high school educators are encouraged by Catholic hierarchy to build a fuller integration of the Church's social teachings in to the mainstream of Catholic high school education. The high school students must be offered not just abstract principles but a justice framework for every day action in their school culture. The purpose of this integrated education is so that students may be "taught social analysis and be prepared not just to fit into society but

also to be leaders who help create a more just society..." (Heft, 2006, p. 17). One of the ways in which students in Catholic high school are educated for social justice consciousness is through service activities and programs which are explored further here.

Social Justice Education in Catholic High School

Though there are many ways in which Catholic high school students may raise their social justice consciousness, one of the most obvious involves service (Taylor & Agarwal, 2010). This gives students the opportunity to serve others, develop a reciprocal relationship with the local community and instill a sense of bonding among students (Nunn, 2002).

Social justice education in service and volunteerism. The Christian Scriptures and Catholic faith tradition invites people to serve (Fourré et al., 2007). One of the formal ways in which Catholic schools educate their students for social justice consciousness is through community service learning programs within religious education curriculum (Engebretson, 2009). However, community service learning and community service are considered to be relatively different in definition and practice (Bickett, 2008).

Community service learning and community service. Community service learning is defined as "experiential learning designed to provide needed service to the community while allowing students to learn and apply course contents in the real world" (Krain & Nurse, 2004, p. 190). It provides a reflective experiential complement to more theoretical learning. On the other hand, community service is focused on service to the community but without the tie in to academic goals or curricular programming (Bickett, 2008). Some scholars, however, suggest that these two service terms are often used interchangeably because no clear definition exists (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002). Not every Catholic school purports to do community service

learning, but simply community service, although the hope is that students learn social justice values through their service activities. However, in Catholic schools community service is viewed with a faith lens and entitled as Christian service (Lavery, 2007).

Christian service. Although community service in a variety of curriculum areas is very common in secondary schools and tertiary institutions, in Catholic schools, it grows from the Catholic vision of life and values (Engebretson, 2009). It is situated within the faith curriculum of the Catholic schools, encouraging students to put the principles of the gospel in to action. For this reason community service in Catholic schools is often called Christian service, and thus, will be the term used throughout this dissertation.

Both Christian service and community service have certain common features such as, emphasizing service to others, countering individualism and selfishness, and particularly a call to volunteerism.

Volunteerism. Social scientists Farkas and Johnson (1997) determined that volunteers are an important component of American society and are a critical component for implementing youth and other development programs. Volunteerism is defined as, "Giving time, energies, or talents to any individual or group for which [the individual] is-not paid" (Safrit, King, & Burcsu, 1994, p. 7). The service-oriented nature of volunteerism provides opportunities to build relationships and bonds with one another in society which is important social capital to counter individualism, and self-centered attitudes and behaviors.

Nunn (2002) observed that volunteerism not only provides services to the people but it also fosters opportunities for community building.

Service can be a community commons where people come together to create layers of social connection and relationships. From traditional service clubs like Kiwanis, to neighborhood associations, to nonprofit boards, volunteerism weaves individuals together into the tapestry of community. Volunteers provide the human capital to run the independent sector. Millions of volunteers do the important work that allow voluntary associations to feed the hungry, advocate for social change, research new discoveries, protect neighborhoods, and worship together in community. (p. 14)

Volunteerism rates and reasons. According to Allison Gray (2009), the United States Labor Department statistics in 2008 showed that approximately 26% of the population volunteered at least once between September 2007 and September 2008. The Labor Department noted a rise in teen volunteers ages between sixteen to nineteen (U.S. Labor Department, 2008; as cited in Gray, 2009). And recently, the labor department reported that 26.3% of Americans volunteered in 2010, which is an increase of 0.3% from 2008 (U.S. Labor Department, 2011). However, this suggests that there is a trend of low volunteering among the American population and the need for increasing the volunteer aspirations of the American people.

Prior studies of volunteers have focused on the underlying reasons for volunteerism. Clary et al., (1998) postulated that volunteerism serves six functions for volunteers: (a) fulfilling an altruistic value and humanitarian concerns for others; (b) having an urge to find opportunities for new learning experiences; (c) wanting to enhance the social relationships with others; (d) considering the benefits related to career from volunteer participation; (e) protecting the individual by reduction of guilt over being more fortunate than others; and (f) enhancing the improvement of self-esteem. A subsequent descriptive study of volunteers in Ohio, Schmiesing,

Soder, & Russell (2005) used Clary's functions to develop a survey and found that individuals were more encouraged by their altruistic values such as empathy for the poor, homeless, and sick, and justice for the oppressed than by other aspects of volunteerism. Thus, the researchers concluded that volunteerism is the result of the values people have in their life and the meaning they find in them. Findings such as this suggest that Christian service programs in Catholic high schools may guide students to learn and find meaning in socially just principles as they engage with others through life.

Christian service programs in Catholic high schools. In a case study of the Catholic teachers in 16 Catholic secondary schools in Australia, Engebretson (2009) found Christian service was an essential dimension of the identity of Catholic secondary schools. In all of the 16 case study schools, Christian service programs were mandatory for students. The service took the form of supporting local Christian service organizations, and supporting overseas missions either by fund raising or visits to assist in the work of the mission. In some schools, students were involved often in after school hours in supporting refugees, helping refugee children with their home work, working in soup kitchens, and participating in trips to developing countries to engage in construction projects. In some other schools, students visited and entertained the elderly, visited the homeless, raised funds to help projects, and tutored and shared games with children with disabilities (Engebretson, 2009). These service learning programs included specific and structured time for students to reflect on their learning (Lavery, 2007).

Engebretson (2009) found that the religious education leaders claimed that a common reaction of the students when immersed in a situation where they saw hardship, deprivation, and social problems was a sense of their own complacency and selfishness, and a challenge to the

stereotypes they had easily assimilated from their culture (Lavery, 2007; Leonard, 2004).

Another reaction was that students had admiration for people who tried to lead deeply human lives under great disadvantage (Engebretson, 2009). The students recognized the people they served in the correctional institutions, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, refugee centers, and nursing homes as people rather than abstract entities about whom it is very easy to make superficial judgments (Krain & Nurse, 2004). Engebretson (2009) attributed this recognition to the specific methods teachers used to guide students' critical reflections of the situations they had experienced in Christian service activities.

Christian Service and critical social analysis. Engebretson (2009) contends that among his case study schools, the foundational principle underlying the Christian service programs was *noblesse oblige* – the privileged serving the less privileged (Gerics, 1991). Freire (2009) calls this as a "false generosity" (p. 44) in the context of oppressor and oppressed where the oppressors perpetuate injustice in order to have the continued opportunity to express their generosity to the oppressed. An attitude of "pity" rather than "solidarity" is at work here. "An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this [false] generosity..." and "a true generosity consists of fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity" (Freire, 2009, p. 44 & 45).

While the privileged serving the less privileged is in conformity with the message of the Gospels, Christian service programs in Catholic secondary schools should be aimed at initiating counter cultural and critical analysis of the inequitable societal structures and practices (Engebretson, 2009). Christian service programs are not merely charitable works with their overtones of condescension and acceptance of status quo of the inequity of opportunity between rich and poor (Engebretson, 2009). Rather they call for the transformation of the world in light of

the gospel principle of human dignity, freedom, solidarity, and option for the poor and vulnerable. The Christian vision of life is not merely charity, but requires action for justice in keeping with the principles of Catholic social teaching (Gerics, 1991). These principles challenge the privileged in favor of a more equitable society, to constantly question and critique the hegemonic structures that ensure that inequality of opportunity continues (National Catholic Education Commission, 2007). Guided reflection on the experience of Christian service can assist students to see its deeper meaning and critique the unjust structures that keep the status quo of poverty in place (di Giacomo, 2007), rather than accept the principle of “*noblesse oblige*” as Engebretson (2009) found. One way to provide guided reflection to students at Catholic high school is through a developed Christian service program.

Mandatory Christian service and Catholic high school. Catholic high schools commonly mandate Christian service programs for their students. However, mandatory Christian service programs are debated in the area of Catholic education. While some researchers argue that compulsory service programs infringe on students' freedom to choose, and will cause to diminish or cease interest in voluntary service in students' future lives beyond school (Engebretson, 2009), others suggest that mandatory Christian service in high schools may reduce intrinsic motivation for future services (Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 1999). However, studies by Metz and Youniss (2003) found that the requirement of community service was a positive motivating force in students taking up voluntary community service later. Engebretson, (2009) in his case study of schools and community service found that the mandatory nature of placing students with their peers in Christian service programs served as a confidence building factor for students who otherwise would have declined to do volunteer service (p. 201). Further, Bickett

(2008) in a case study of student leadership and service in a Catholic female single-sex high school, found that although students expressed dissatisfaction with the mandatory nature of the service requirement, they ultimately expressed willingness and engagement in completing the mandatory service. However, most students found ways to complete service to serve their individual needs. Thus, Bickett (2008) found that while participation in service was high, student attitudes about it may have diminished its effectiveness for future community service. This corroborates with Engebretson's (2009) findings.

The benefits of doing service. Social scientist Waterman (1997) conceptualized four intended benefits that students derive from involvement in service: (a) enhanced learning of in-class curriculum, (b) reflective development of attitudes and values, increased self-efficacy and self-esteem, (c) development of civic responsibility and other citizenship values, and (d) satisfaction of contributing to the community. Consistent with Waterman's (1997) conceptualization, various studies have found that service increases individual's social responsibility, civic values, and personal development, including a sense of personal efficacy and self esteem, confidence in social and political skills and improved ability to build relationships with others (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Kendrick, 1996; Mabry, 1998; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Myers-Lipton, 1996; Parker-Gwin, 1996; Sax & Astin, 1997). In a research study with four separate groups of undergraduate students who participated in community service programs at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blieszner and Artale (2001) found that students commonly identified the benefits of community service corresponding to "enhancement of in-class learning, promotion of personal development, commitment to civic responsibility, and

contributing to community" (p. 85). In another study with undergraduate students about the application of community service, Parker et al. (2009) found that 80% of students developed an awareness of community issues and civic responsibility, 75% of students confirmed learning more about themselves and enhanced their skill in relation to team work, communication, organization, conflict resolution, and knowledge of community service sector.

Christian service and social commitment. Christian service also fosters a reciprocal relationship between educational institutions and service providing organizations, which creates conducive atmosphere for students to develop personal values for social commitment. Researchers Baratte (2005), di Giacomo (2007), and Horan (2005) argue that because the students are placed in institutions and situations that serve the needs of community, rather than the outcome of the curriculum, there is a genuine reciprocity between the school and the service providing institutions. The students, by doing service, learned to do things *with* others rather than *for* others (Lavery & Richards, 2006). This benefited students with a heightened sense of belonging in school and a responsibility for the local community. In an in-depth interview conducted with key teachers in the case study of Engebretson (2009), the participants affirmed that their students displayed a sense of belonging to school and a responsibility to the local community. This heightened sense of belonging and usefulness was very affirming for students. It helped them to challenge the sense of powerlessness that many young people feel in confronting social issues that seem to them almost insurmountable (Engebretson, 2009).

Christian service and identity development. Further, it has been demonstrated that the involvement of young people in Christian service contributes to positive identity development during an opportune development period (Youniss, McIellan, Su, & Yates, 1999). Here, an

opportune developmental period is understood as the period where the internal and external conditions help students to learn and develop social justice consciousness. Developmentally, the high school age provides students with internal capacities for abstract reasoning (Piage, 1970; as cited in Mc Devitt & Ormrod, 2007), and the high school setting provides the external conditions for the opportune time which Youniss et al. (1999) affirm. It is important to note here that not all Catholic school students are necessarily baptized Catholics or belong to the Catholic faith in Catholic schools. The National Catholic Education Association (2011) statistics shows that non-Catholic enrollment in Catholic schools has steadily increased from 2.7% in 1970 to 15.4% in 2011–2012 in all grades, and 19.2% in secondary schools. However, "all students in a Catholic school must, while at school, agree in some measure to live by the values of the Catholic faith and participate in activities as manifested in the Catholic school environment" (Bickett, 2008, p. 42). Those who have disagreements with Catholic values and a required Christian service philosophy, may have the opportunity to move on to another school. But for those who choose to live in the Catholic school community and embrace its values, there can be "power in this identity" (Bickett, 2008, p. 42), and empowerment to engage in social justice activities.

The possible lessons and values students may have learned in a Catholic high school Christian service program are not necessarily short lived, but may have long term effects in the lives of students in their adult life. The long term benefit of Catholic high school education on graduates' perspective and participation in social justice activities will now be addressed.

Long Term Impact of Catholic High School Service Education

The scholarship on long term impact of Catholic high school service education on young adult alumnae, particularly from the perspective of Catholic social teaching is not present to date.

However, there is research involving college freshmen, young adults, and adults from the perspective of faith practices, community service, volunteerism, and civic engagement. These components are a significant part of school culture in the Catholic high school. Researchers such as Bennett (2009), Marks & Kuss (2001), Planty, Boznick, & Regnier (2006), and the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) study by Pryor et al. (2009), have linked faith practices, volunteerism, and civic engagement of college freshmen and young adults to their high school educational experience. Research studies on these components involving young adults and adults can perhaps shed light on the experience and impact of high school service.

Volunteerism in college and young adults. Volunteer service in college and in young adult life has been linked to high school volunteer service experiences (Pryor et al., 2009; Planty, et al., 2006). According to a 2009 HERI report by Pryor and colleagues, volunteering and community service experience in high school impacted students' volunteering and community service while they were in college. For example, in 2009 the incoming college freshmen who volunteered "frequently" in their high school (56.9%) indicated that there was a "very good chance" they would continue volunteering in college. Among these, 79.8% of students actually did volunteer within the first year of their college (DeAngelo, Hurtado, & Pryor, 2010; as cited in Pryor et al., 2009, p. 11). In contrast, those who did not volunteer in high school (20.9%) expected that they would continue in this fashion (DeAngelo et al., 2010; as cited in Pryor et al., 2009, p. 11). Planty, Boznick, and Regnier's (2006) analysis from a large data set of high school students found that both mandatory and voluntary community service in high school positively influenced engagement in volunteer work in adulthood.

Pro-social identity. Volunteerism empowers and supports the student's pro-social role identity construction (Callero, Howard, & Piliavin 1987; Grube & Piliavin, 2000; Piliavin & Callero, 1991). In experiencing voluntary actions, individuals tend to develop a strong sense of "voluntary or service identity" (Marta & Pozzi, 2008, p. 38). As this identity continues to develop and grow, individuals strengthen their commitment to engage in pro-social actions (Piliavin, Grube, & Callero, 2002). The pro-social role identity is a key construct to promoting a social justice attitude through community involvement over a period of time (Marta & Pozzi, 2008). Pro-social role identity is also a crucial factor in assuring intention to volunteer (Youniss & Yates, 1997). For Catholic high school young adult alumnae, their Catholic faith based high school education attempts to develop a distinct Catholic social justice identity in them which informs their decision to continue or to volunteer during their adult life.

Volunteerism is also connected to social agency values among freshmen college students (Pryor et al., 2009). According to HERI research in 2009, college freshmen who had volunteered or participated in community service in their high school years were found to be much more likely to begin college with a higher degree of "social agency values" — that is the extent to which students value political and social involvement in community as a personal goal, than those who did not have these experiences (Pryor et al., 2009). Further, the HERI study also states that college freshmen who have volunteered in high school or expect to volunteer in college have a stronger "pluralistic orientation," that is skills and dispositions for living and working in a diverse society than students without these experiences (p. 12). Thus, college freshmen having a higher degree of social agency values and pluralistic orientation suggests that college freshmen who had volunteer experience in their high school are more community oriented and other—

centered persons rather than individualistic and self-centered persons. Their tendency is to continue to elevate their spirit of community service and volunteerism, which they brought with them from their high school, to a higher level during their college years, and potentially sustain them through their adult life (Pryor et al., 2009).

Researchers have suggested that both self-focused and other-focused factors work in different ways to influence the volunteer life course (Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Omoto, Synder, & Berghuis, 1993; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998). One research study by Omoto and Snyder (1995) found that self-focused factors such as self growth and career interests sustained longer volunteer service, while other-focused factors, such as compassionate values or community concern, did not. Other studies such as Deaux and Stark (1996), and Penner and Finkelstien (1998) found the opposite result, that is, the other-focused factors predicted length of service. Moreover, Clary and colleagues (1998) found self-focused factors predicted the intention to remain active in volunteering for a longer time. However, the other-focused factors emerged as relating to initiating voluntary service (Okun, 1994; Omoto & Snyder, 1995). All these conflicting findings suggest that there is no one single factor affecting the decision of the individual, and by extension, the Catholic high school young adult alumnae, to engage in pro-social behavior. Rather, it is more of “combining different [factors]” (Marta, Guglielmetti, & Poozi, 2006, p. 223) that “each individual acts in an attempt to satisfy not one but multiple [aspirations]” (Kiviniemi, Snyder, & Omoto, 2002, p. 733). However, one research study showed that it is the other-focused factors, rather than self-focused, that maintain the “commitment” of volunteers for a long period of time. For example, an in-depth interview with 12 Italian young adult volunteers and a self report filled out by 155 Italian young adult volunteers showed that

young adults' initial volunteerism was determined both by self-focused and other-focused factors, but they maintained the commitment for an extended time on the basis of other-focused factors (Guglielmetti & Marta, 2003; Poozi & Marta, 2006). Further, Okun and Schultz (2003) studied the effects of age on volunteer aspirations and found that as age increases, the self-focused factors of career and understanding in volunteer aspiration decrease and the other-focused social volunteer aspirations increase. This suggests that as individuals grow from adolescence to young adult life and move on to adult life, their aspirations to work for the common good of the society shifts from self-focused factors of career and understanding to community concern or social concern aspirations.

Women and Service

Research has shown that females volunteer more than males. For example, a 2005 survey with American youth aged between 12 and 18 found that 58 percent of the girls had volunteered in the past year compared with 49 percent of the boys (Grimm, Dietz, Spring, Arely, & Foster-Bey, 2005). An annual survey of high school seniors in the United States found 38.8 percent females compared to 28.2 percent males had volunteered at least once or twice in the previous year (Fox, Connolly, & Snyder, 2005). Studies with U.S. college freshmen also found gender differences in volunteering. For example, in a 2001 survey with U.S. college freshmen, Astin et al (2002) found that more of the males (36.4%) than females (24.1%) had not volunteered at all in their senior year of high school. Another study with the similar population by Pryor et al (2007) found that 35.9 percent of the males compared to 23.9 percent of the females had not volunteered at all in their senior high school year. Recently, the survey from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that 29.6 percent of females

compared to 23.2 percent of males volunteered across the total American population aged 16 and above in the past 12 months (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2011).

Longitudinal studies suggest that the gender gap widens in volunteering as people make the transition to adulthood (Musick & Wilson, 2008). In a study with a cohort of high school students in St. Paul, Minnesota, who were followed for a few years after graduation, there were no gender differences while they were in high school, but when they became young adults many of the males stopped volunteering and some of the females started volunteering (Oesterle, Johnson, & Mortiner, 2004). In another longitudinal study, the high school seniors were asked about their volunteer work in 1992, and information on their volunteer work was gathered again in 1994 and 2000. The statistical analysis showed that 50 percent of the girls compared to 38 percent of boys were more likely to volunteer in high school. This gender difference had disappeared two years after their graduation from high school. However, by 2000 when the respondents were aged 26, volunteering rate had dropped to 29 percent for male and 37 percent for female, suggesting that as men and women entered adulthood and assumed adult responsibilities, gender differences reappeared, and female volunteered more than males (Planty & Regnier, 2003). Although research has shown that there is gender difference in volunteering among American males and females, the choice of this study at an all female Catholic high school was based on the convenience of access to the school site, alumnae association, and school personnel.

Conclusion

The impact of Catholic high school education on female single sex Catholic high school young adult alumnae's perspective and engagement for social justice issues and activities

requires a broad range of literature for a holistic understanding of the subject. This review of literature began by stating the challenge of individualism and the increase in materialism in American society. The Catholic faith tradition was presented as a response to those challenges. The Catholic Church's social justice themes were then analyzed. Implications for Catholic high school were discussed, and ways in which students in Catholic high school can be educated for social justice consciousness were stated. Particular importance was given to Christian service and volunteerism. The long-term impact of Catholic high school education for social justice was presented, and the issue of women and volunteerism was explored.

Catholic high school is an important educational vehicle to educate the future educational, social, business, and political leaders of the American society. Educating them with a social justice consciousness is a challenging task for educators, school administrators, and educational institutions. The continued research on Catholic high school young adult alumnae's aspirations for engagement in social justice issues and activities may bring forth positive results for educators, administrators, educational institutions, and policy makers to provide appropriate Catholic high school service experience for their students.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

This research study investigated how a Catholic high school Christian service program has impacted young adult alumnae response to, and engagement with social justice issues and activities. This mixed method study used survey, interview, and document review to collect data in order to establish evidence for the findings.

Research Question

This study of St. Mary's Catholic high school young adult alumnae used two research questions that are related to each other. The first research question consisted of three questions which captured the community service experiences of young adult alumnae who attended Catholic high school. The second research question examined the relationship of these experiences to the alumnae's understanding of Catholic social teaching principles, and current engagement in social justice related activities. The research questions are as follows:

Research Question 1:

- (a) What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current beliefs about service?
- (b) What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current engagement in service?
- (c) What is the level of actual service engagement of young adult alumnae who participated in a Christian service program at a Catholic female single sex high school?

Research Question 2: To what extent did young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school believe that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs about and current engagement with Catholic Social Teaching principles?

Research Design

This study utilized a mixed methods research design. Mixed methods is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and conducting both qualitative and quantitative data at certain stages of the research process within a single study in order to understand a research problem more completely (Creswell, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). It involves the use of both research approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The concept of mixing is defined as integrating or merging both data into one large database, or the results are used side by side to reinforce each other (Creswell, 2009). In this study the results from quantitative and qualitative data were used side by side to strengthen each other. The rationale for mixing these two methods was that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods were sufficient by themselves to capture the voices of Catholic high school young adult alumnae regarding their perceptions of their Catholic high school Christian service experience impacting their perspectives and engagement in social justice issues and activities in American society. Recognizing that all methods have limitations, researchers in the social sciences suggest that in mixed methods, biases inherent in any single method can neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods (Creswell, 2009). Collecting and validating diverse types of data such as survey, interview, and document review were helpful not only to eliminate biases, but also led to a better understanding of the research problem.

Qualitative and Quantitative: A Complementary Research Design

The quantitative survey data provided a description of attitudes and opinions of Catholic high school young adult alumnae about their perspectives and engagement in social justice issues and activities in the American society, while the qualitative research method of an in-depth individual interview captured the voices of participants. The interview provided the researcher the opportunity to explore and understand: (a) the meanings and values that the young adult alumnae constructed (Hatch, 2002) or ascribed to their Catholic high school Christian service program experience; (b) the young adult alumnae perspectives about the relationship between their Catholic high school Christian service experience and social justice; and, (c) how they related their current engagement in social justice issues and activities to their Catholic high school Christian service program experience. Thus the quantitative and qualitative methods complemented each other in exploring the research questions of this study.

In designing a mixed methods study, three important elements need consideration: priority, implementation, and integration (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Priority refers to which method, either quantitative or qualitative, is emphasized more in the study. Implementation refers to whether the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis comes in sequence or in chronological stages, or, in parallel or concurrently. Integration refers to the phase in the research process where the mixing or connecting of quantitative and qualitative data takes place. The following will detail the priority, implementation, and integration of research method in this study.

This research used one of the most popular mixed methods strategies in educational research, namely the "sequential explanatory strategy" (Creswell, 2009, p. 211). This strategy

involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data in a first phase of research followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in a second phase (Creswell, 2009). Though Creswell (2009) suggests that in a sequential explanatory strategy the emphasis in collecting and analyzing data is usually given to quantitative research method, in this study, the quantitative data informed the qualitative data collection and analysis. The personal experiences and perspectives of young adult alumnae on their Catholic high school Christian service program could not be fully captured by numerical data through survey, therefore an in-depth conversation with the participants was needed. The initial quantitative survey data was used as complementary to the qualitative interview data in order to draw out appropriate inferences and possibilities about the perspectives of young adult alumnae. This strategy has been especially useful to examine and explain the unexpected results from the survey (Morse, 1991). For example, in this study, the unexpected result was that the young adult alumnae scored higher in their beliefs about the importance of service, and lower in their engagement with service activities. The possible reasons for the alumnae's lack of active engagement in service activities were inferred and explained through the interview data.

Research Site

For this study, St. Mary's, a female single sex Catholic high school in a large urban area in the Western United States was chosen for the research site. This school was selected because it is Catholic in nature, the current students are and reportedly have been actively engaged in social justice related activities; it has a large number of adult alumnae in its alumnae association, and the documents indicated that the school administration and the staff emphasized social justice activities in the school culture. While selection of the all female high school was made

primarily for convenience and ease of digital access to appropriate alumnae participants, the male single sex, and co-educational school settings may be areas for future research.

Research Population

The participants for this study came from St. Mary's Catholic high school young adult alumnae association, from the graduated classes of 1998 to 2005, and whose age range was primarily between 23 to 30 years. This age range was appropriate for the study based on the research that moral reasoning, and abstract principles such as personal values, beliefs, and convictions in an individual's life are considered most clearly reflected during the time period of young adult life and above (Kohlberg, 1963, 1976, 1984). Lawrence Kohlberg, a cognitive-developmental psychologist, proposed that the development of moral reasoning is characterized by a sequence of six stages grouped in to three general levels of moral reasoning: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, & Lieberman, 1983; Kohlberg, 1963, 1976, 1984). The post-conventional stage, mostly in college age and above, the age range of the participants in this study, values the protection of human rights by questioning the existing rules, developing genuine empathy for people in distress, believing in the equality of all people, showing respect for human dignity, showing commitment to justice, and living by "abstract principles about right and wrong – principles that typically include such basic human rights as life, liberty, and justice" (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2007, p. 518).

Some psychologists such as Carol Gilligan (1982) has argued that Kohlberg's stages of moral development reflect a "justice orientation" (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2007, p. 522) that is, an emphasis on fairness and equal rights which characterizes male's moral reasoning, and it does not adequately describe female's moral development (Gilligan, 1982, 1987; Gilligan & Attanucci,

1988). She proposed that females take a "care orientation" (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2007, p. 522) toward moral issues, that is, focusing on interpersonal relationships and taking responsibility for others' well-being. However, most research studies do not find major gender differences in moral reasoning (Eisenberg, Martin, & Fabes, 1996; Nunner-Winkler, 1984; Walker, 1991). Although minor differences sometimes emerge in early adolescence, usually favoring females, they disappear in late adolescence (Basinger, Gibbs, & Fuller, 1995; Eisenberg et al., 1996). Further, males and females typically incorporate both justice and care in to their moral reasoning (Rothbart, Hanley, & Albert, 1986; Smetana, Killen, & Turiel, 1991; Walker, 1995). Kohlberg's (1963, 1976, 1984) theory seems to suggest that the lessons learned in Catholic high school regarding the abstract principles pertaining to issues such as human dignity, hunger, poverty, homelessness, empathy, and the like will begin to appear most clearly in the young adult life of high school graduates. The developmental and intellectual maturity of young adults may help them to reflect back on their high school service experience, relate them to their current life, and articulate their current beliefs, values, and convictions regarding issues related to social justice.

For this study "Catholic high school young adult alumnae" has been defined as those who attended Catholic high school from 9th grade to 12th grade, graduated within the years 1998 to 2005, and whose age was primarily between 23 to 30 years. Their current occupation or life pursuit was irrelevant to this study. The primary criteria for participants were that they had graduated from a Catholic high school between the years 1998 to 2005.

Participant Recruitment

The researcher met with the principal of St. Mary's Catholic high school as well as the alumnae director in November, 2010 and explained to them in detail about this study to obtain

their preliminary permission to conduct research with their alumnae. Further, the researcher had a phone conversation with the alumnae director in June, 2011 and discussed further details of the process to conduct this research. The principal, and the alumnae director agreed to help the researcher in whatever way possible to complete this study. Recruiting of participants for this mixed methods study occurred in two phases: survey and individual interview.

Phase I: Survey

Rationale. This study used a quantitative survey in order to obtain descriptive and numerical data from a large population for the purpose of gathering a broader range of perspectives. Surveys can provide data to describe opinions, attitudes, and beliefs (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). They "add precision to qualitative descriptions of phenomena" (Krathwohl & Smith, 2005, p. 164). A survey is an instrument which collects data that describe one or more characteristics of a specific population (Gay et al., 2009). The cross-sectional survey in which data are collected from selected individuals at a single point in time (Gay et al., 2009) was used. It was a single and stand-alone survey. The cross-sectional survey is effective for providing a snapshot of the beliefs, attitudes, convictions, and engagement of the young adult alumnae based on their Catholic high school Christian service experience.

Participant recruitment for survey. The alumnae director had offered to recruit the participants through the school e-mail data base. However, St. Mary's school had only a limited number of e-mail addresses for alumnae who graduated in 1998 – 2005. Therefore, the process of recruitment took place in two ways. First, the available e-mail addresses of alumnae which are maintained at St. Mary's high school alumnae database were grouped together in an Excel spreadsheet by the alumnae director, and were given to the researcher. By using this e-mail list,

an e-mail was sent by the researcher to those potential participants with an explanation about the study, a request to take the survey, and a request to forward it to their classmates, thus recruiting more participants through the help of alumnae who received the e-mail from the researcher.

Second, the alumnae director posted a message about this study, including the survey web-link, on to St. Mary's high school website and face-book with an explanation about this study, and an invitation to those who graduated in the years 1998 to 2005 to take the survey. Further, since the initial response to the survey was very slow for more than 15 days from the date of the survey distribution, the researcher sought the help of the religious education, and young adult ministry coordinators from three churches near to St. Mary's high school by giving them a printed flier to spread the word about this online survey to those alumnae, requesting them either to visit St. Mary's school website to complete the survey, or contact the researcher either by e-mail or phone to obtain the survey web-link via e-mail. Towards the end of the fourth week from the date of the survey distribution, those coordinators distributed the flyer to their religious education students after class, and young adult ministry members after their regular meeting session, requesting them to communicate this message to their known alumnae from St. Mary's high school.

Survey participants' demographics. The total number of alumnae from 1998 to 2005 was 1170. The total number of attempted survey participants was 166, and the total number who completed the survey was 140 young adult alumnae. Among these, 131($N = 131$) participants reported that they graduated from St. Mary's high school from 1998 to 2005 which is the population included in this study. Only the data from these 131 ($N = 131$) participants were

analyzed in this study. The age of these participants ($N = 131$) ranged primarily from 23 through 30 years. The following table presents their age range.

Table 1

Survey Participants' Age Range (N=131)

Age range	Participants	Percentage
21-22	3	2.29%
23-24	15	11.45%
25-26	31	23.66%
27-28	33	25.19%
29-30	41	31.30%
31-32	8	6.11%

The participants' high school graduation years ranged from 1998 through 2005. The following table presents the year of alumnae's graduation as they reported:

Table 2

Survey Participants' Graduating Years (N=131)

Graduating Year	Number of Graduates	Percentage
1998	7	5.34%
1999	31	23.66%
2000	10	7.63%
2001	21	16.03%
2002	14	10.69%
2003	11	8.40%
2004	16	12.21%
2005	21	16.03%

The survey participants' ethnicities were White/Caucasian (30%), Hispanic/ Latina (21%), Asian (21%), and Pacific Islander (12%). The following table illustrates participants' ethnicity:

Table 3

Survey Participants' Ethnicity (N=131)

Ethnicity	Number of participants	Percentage
White/Caucasian	39	29.80%
African-American	2	1.50%
Hispanic/Latina	28	21.40%
Asian	30	21.40%
Pacific Islander	16	12.20%
Middle Eastern	1	0.80%
Multi-Racial	13	9.90%
Other	2	3.10%

Among the 131 ($N = 131$) participants, 121 (92.40%) reported that they attended a Catholic elementary school, 26 (22.20%) reported that they attended a Catholic college/university, 124 (95.40%) indicated that they were raised as a Roman Catholic, 104 (80%) reported that their current religious identification is Roman Catholic, and 12 (9.20%) indicated that they are Christians. Further, 127 (96.94%) participants also reported that their current attendance in religious worship services ranged from "always" to "never." The following table illustrates alumnae's current religious service attendance:

Table 4

Survey Participants' Current Religious Worship Service Attendance (N=127)

Current Worship Service Attendance	Participants	Percentage
Never	7	5.50%
Rarely	38	29.90%
Sometimes	36	28.30%
Often	25	19.70%
Always	21	16.50%

Phase II: Interview

Rationale. In this study, the researcher used the qualitative method of individual interview. Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding the phenomena (Creswell, 2009). Through the interview the researcher developed a holistic view of the perspectives of alumnae about the importance of Christian service in their lives through descriptive analysis of words and detailed reports of the views of informants (Gay et al., 2009). In this approach the researcher claimed knowledge based on the constructivist (Hatch, 2002) or advocacy/participatory (Mertens, 2003) perspectives.

An interview is a "purposeful interaction" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 370) which permitted the researcher to gather valuable complementary data which would not have been obtained from survey alone. The data for in-depth perspectives, experiences, feelings, beliefs, and values, which were part of an individual's philosophy of life, were illuminated best by one on one conversation with the participants. Further, the reasons for the young adult alumnae's perspective and engagement in social justice activities were best elucidated by person to person conversation with the participants rather than through survey alone.

Participant recruitment for interview. The second phase of participant recruitment for this study consisted recruiting nine alumnae from St. Mary's Catholic high school to participate in an in-depth individual interview. The criteria for selecting the interview participants were: (a) must have studied from 9th grade to 12th grade in St. Mary's Catholic high school, (b) must have completed and graduated from St. Mary's Catholic high school between the years 1998 to 2005, (c) must be between the age range of not less than 21 and not more than 32 by May 31, 2012, and (d) must agree to the interview.

The interview participants were recruited from those who took the survey. Although the survey response was anonymous, a question was asked in the survey to indicate their willingness to take part in the interview. The interviewees were selected from among the respondents who had indicated their willingness to participate in the interview and provided their e-mail address and phone number. Thus the selection was a "purposive sampling" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 134). Identified participants' e-mail addresses and phone were grouped together. There were 24 respondents who indicated their interest to take part in the interview and provided their e-mail addresses, of these, 21 respondents also gave their phone number. The researcher chose to randomly select the first 10 respondents who gave both the e-mail address and phone number. This selection was to facilitate to make sure and speed up the process of communication with the interview participants to conduct the interview. The selected individuals were notified of their selection through e-mail and phone calls. Of these 10, one did not respond to researcher's e-mail or phone calls, despite four attempts to communicate with her. Therefore, the researcher limited the interview with nine participants.

Demographics of interview participants. The interview participants consisted of varied ethnicities and year of high school graduation. The following table presents these details.

Table 5

Individual Interview Participants' Demographics

Participants' Names (Pseudonyms)	Ethnicity	Year of Graduation
Amala	Asian	2004
Jane	Asian	1999
Christine	Asian	2002
Jennifer	Asian	1999
Josephine	White/Caucasian	2002
Rose	White/Caucasian	2004
Anna	White/Caucasian	1999
Mary	Portuguese	2004
Fatima	Hispanic/Latina	2000

Phase III: Document Review

Rationale. The researcher reviewed documents related to student Christian service program activities at St. Mary's Catholic high school after completing the survey and interview phases of the data collection. The reason for conducting documents review as the final stage of data collection in this research study was to identify the types of service program activities that St. Mary's Catholic high school provided for participant alumnae, and what their perspective of this program might have been at the time the service was completed. The identification of the types of service activities and perspectives of alumnae informed themes or patterns that emerged from the survey and interviews, as well as aided with the triangulation of the data to confirm the nature of the Christian service program and student engagement in service activities.

Acquisition and types of documents for review. The researcher visited the school site and obtained permission from the principal to review various school documents related to

student service experience. The researcher sought the help of the school Christian service program director/media center director to obtain the needed documents. This study reviewed various types of school records or documents available. Documents reviewed included Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) documents, school service program guidelines, student and parent handbook, and school yearbooks that are related to the time period of the participants in this study. These data sources naturally occurred in educational settings and provided valuable historical insights, identified trends, and provided insights about the types of service experiences alumnae had during their Catholic high school Christian service program. The data from these sources were also used to gain valuable information about the school culture prevalent during the time of participants' high school years. The researcher looked for evidence of student service training, exposure, opportunities to engage, and activities involved in social justice related issues. These documents were helpful for the researcher to correlate the participants' current perspectives, beliefs, convictions, and engagements in social justice issues and activities with their Catholic high school Christian service program experience.

For the purpose of protecting the identity of the participant young adult alumnae as well as other individuals who are either working at St. Mary's high school currently, or have moved on, pseudonyms have been used to refer to all names of persons, names of centers where students performed service activities, and the names of neighborhood places near to St. Mary's school. Names of places which are significantly distanced from the school where students did service were not changed.

Data Collection

The data collection in this study took place in three phases. In the first phase a survey was conducted. In the second phase an in-depth individual interview with nine young adult alumnae were conducted. In the third phase the researcher undertook a document review of school records.

Survey

Survey sample. The quantitative survey used a convenience sampling (Gay et al., 2009). Convenience sampling is the "process of including whoever happens to be available at the time" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 134). For this study, the available school e-mail data base of the alumnae between the years 1998 to 2005, the school website, and the school face-book were used to conduct the survey.

Survey instrument. The researcher created a survey in the Qualtrics.com survey website maintained at the researcher's university website using survey questions developed by the researcher with the help of a survey expert. The survey contained items of different formats such as structured and unstructured items. The structured items included participants' demographic information. Questions related to participants' perspective about their experience with their Catholic high school Christian service program and their current engagement with service activities were in a 5 point Likert scale with questions ranging from "Not at all" to "A Great Deal." Two unstructured questions such as free response or open ended questions were included to facilitate greater freedom for the participants to offer their multiple perspectives on the research topic. Finally, one structured question of dichotomous answer of "Yes" or "No" was

used to ask participants' interest to take part in an individual interview. The survey is available for review in appendix A.

The first section of the survey contained 12 questions, Q 1–12, that measured participants' demographic information such as age, years of Catholic schooling, year of high school graduation, ethnicity, religious identification, and so on. The second section contained three Likert scale questions, Q 13–15, of which Q 13 measured how often participants took part in service in the past 12 months; Q 14 measured participants' perspective about the extent of their Catholic high school service experience impacting their current engagement in service activities; Q 15 measured participants' perspective about the extent of their Catholic high school service experience impacting their current beliefs about the importance of service. The third section contained 11 questions, Q 16–26, which measured participant's beliefs about and engagement with four Catholic social teaching principles including life and dignity of the human person, preferential option for the poor, solidarity, and rights and responsibilities, relating to their Catholic high school Christian service program experience. The questions 16 to 19 measured participant's beliefs about the four Catholic social teaching principles relating to their Catholic high school Christian service program experience. Questions 20 to 23 measured participant's current engagement with activities related to the four Catholic social teaching principles based on their Catholic high school Christian service program experience. Two questions, Q 24 and Q 25, were open ended to allow the participants to express more about their Catholic high school Christian service program experience impacting their current volunteering habits as well as to provide any other views. Finally, the last question of the survey, Q 26, contained a "Yes" or "No" question to ask the respondents' willingness to participate in an individual interview. If they

answered "yes" to this question, then they were asked to provide their e-mail address and/or phone number for the purpose of making arrangements to conduct the individual interview.

The survey was field tested with 26 Catholic high school young adult alumnae, who were not from St. Mary's school. The field testing of survey instrument was not a pilot test. The participants who participated in the field test were excluded from the subsequent research study. The purpose of the field test was to determine clarity of questions and the time needed to take the survey. Feedbacks from the field test participants were received and minor modifications were made before finalizing the survey instrument.

Survey administration. The survey was administered online. The researcher sent out an e-mail to the 17 alumnae email addresses obtained from the alumnae director which contained a uniform resource locator (URL) web-link which gave access to the alumnae survey by clicking on it. Since St. Mary's did not have e-mail addresses to all alumnae, the survey web-link was posted on St. Mary's school website and face-book and St. Mary's school principal invited all alumnae from 1998 to 2005 to take the survey. An informed consent form (see Appendix B) was posted on the survey web-site as an opening page of the survey. At the end of that page, participants were asked to click on the button "I Agree" or "Decline" in order to give their consent to participate in this study. Their response was anonymous. A reminder e-mail was sent three times to all participants requesting them to complete the survey if they had not done yet. However, the initial response was very slow despite researcher's effort to send reminder to the potential participants. Therefore, the researcher decided to offer a raffle incentive of "iPod shuffle or alumnae sweatshirt" in order to motivate the alumnae to complete the survey. The message of this incentive was sent out via e-mail, and posted on to St. Mary's school website and

face-book as well, and it included the message that upon completing the survey, the participants were asked to send an e-mail to the researcher if they wished to be included in the raffle to win the incentives. The e-mails of those who indicated their desire to be included in the raffle were gathered, and the winners were randomly chosen by a raffle method with the help of the alumnae director and a student from St. Mary's high school. The winners were notified and the prizes were given out.

Interview

Interview sample. The qualitative individual interviews used a purposive sampling (Gay et al., 2009). Purposive sampling is the "process of selecting a sample that is believed to be representative of a given population" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 134). Purposive sampling implies intentionally selecting individuals to gain understanding of the central phenomenon (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this case it is the experience of Catholic high school young adult alumnae. The participants in the survey who indicated their willingness to take part in an individual interview were the population from whom the interviewees were selected. The reason for this purposeful selection was that these individuals were considered to be as "information rich" (Patton, 1990, p. 169) persons who could be "thoughtful, informative, articulate, and experienced with the research topic" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 135). They can best add to the understanding of the subject under study and could provide a diverse perspective on the topic.

Interview protocol. The technique utilized was conducting in-depth "semi-structured interviews" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 371) with open ended and probing questions for about one hour per individual. The open ended questions gave the respondents the opportunity to offer detailed explanation on the subject. The probing questions allowed the researcher to clarify or gather

further information. The interview questions were partially adopted from the previous research study by Bickett (2008), and partially developed by the researcher (see Appendix C). The probing questions are not listed as they emerged on a need-basis during the interview process.

The researcher set up appointments with the nine participants individually. Interview with five participants took place in the nearest church facility of the interviewee. One interview was held in a coffee shop, another was held in the interviewee's house, yet another was held in a school facility, and the last one was held in the interviewee's business facility. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes. The interview was audio recorded with the consent of the interviewee. Each participant was given a pseudonymous name to protect her identity. Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher gave a consent form to the interviewee, explained it, and asked her to sign it (see Appendix D). The signed consent form was collected and secured by the researcher. At the end of the interview the researcher gave a \$10 Starbucks gift certificate to the interviewee as a way to thank the person. This gift was not informed to the participants prior to conducting the interview. It was kept as secret and was given to the interviewee only after completing the interview.

Document Review

Document review protocol. The researcher spent approximately five hours each day for a period of three days looking at various documents to gather evidence to support the research study. Evidence was gathered for the types of service activities the school had provided for alumnae which are related to themes and patterns associated with the four Catholic social teaching principles in this study. Some copies were obtained to maintain proof for presenting the results of this study. The researcher created a chart outlining the school year, the kind of

activities students were engaged, and the corresponding Catholic social teaching principles related to service activities.

Data Analysis

Survey. The numeric data gathered from the survey were automatically received to the researcher's Qualtrics web account maintained at the researcher's university website. This research website had the features that allowed the researcher to generate results for each survey question, view graphs, percentages and so on. Since this study was a descriptive one, the researcher initially decided it was sufficient to use the results generated from the Qualtrics research website for each survey question, and compared them with one another for analysis, to describe the findings. However, there was a need to rectify minor errors in data analysis, and for this secondary data analysis, the researcher utilized SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a commonly used computer software program for statistical analysis, in order to accurately analyze the data. Where it was necessary, the data were transported to Microsoft Excel spread sheet in order to create and edit the tables and graphs. These tables and graphs provided an accurate data to identify different variables such as alumnae's perspectives about the importance of Christian service, and their engagement with service activities, relating to four Catholic social teaching principles. An intense comparison took place between alumnae's beliefs about the importance of service and their current engagement in service relating to four Catholic social teaching principles. Similarities and differences were identified, and the results were described.

Interview. The steps in qualitative data analysis were followed and include: (a) preliminary exploration of the data by reading through the transcripts and writing memos; (b)

coding the data by segmenting and labeling the text; (c) using codes to develop themes by aggregating similar codes together; (d) connecting and interrelating themes; and (e) constructing a narrative (Creswell, 2009).

The Catholic social teaching principles were used as the frame of reference for understanding and categorizing the participants' response to the interview, as well as survey and document review data. The four salient principles of Catholic social teaching such as, the life and dignity of the human person, preferential option for the poor, solidarity and the common good, and rights and responsibilities, and one formative component through which alumnae in this study were impacted at their Catholic high school, namely the Christian service program activities were used to analyze and understand the data. Each of these four principles and service activity components were given a code. For example, the life and dignity of the human person was coded as LD, preferential option for the poor was coded as OP, solidarity and common good was coded as SC, and rights and responsibilities were coded as RR. Alumnae's beliefs and values related to service were coded as BV. Appendix F provides a complete list of codes that were used in data analysis. These codes were used to identify and interpret themes and patterns from the interview, survey, and document review. However, the researcher kept an open eye to identify emerging themes that developed as the data was reviewed.

Document review. The data from the document review was analyzed using codes (see Appendix G) to identify words, statements, policies, and procedures related to Christian service program that may correlate to the four principles of Catholic social teaching in this study. Coding such as "SA-LD" for student activity for life and dignity, "SA-OP" student activity for option for the poor, "SP" for student policies, "E" for explicitly stated in documents, and "I" for implied in

documents and so on were used to understand the data from the document review.

Ethical Considerations

In this study, the strict adherence to the guidelines and recommendations given by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) were maintained by the researcher in order to safeguard the participants from all potential harm. An informed consent form was developed. The form stated that the participants were guaranteed certain rights such as the right to withdraw from the study at any time, the right to review and make changes to their response, and the right to be informed of the final outcome of the study. A written informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to their taking the survey as well as prior to the individuals' participating in the interview.

The issues of confidentiality and anonymity were ensured for the participants. The survey responses were anonymous. The use of pseudonyms was utilized to the participants in the interview for describing and reporting the results. All study data, including the survey electronic files, and interview audio recordings were kept in a locked metal file cabinet in the researcher's office, and audio files were destroyed upon the completion of this research study. The participants were informed that the summary data will be disseminated to the educational and other professional communities, but in no way will it be possible to trace responses to individuals who took part in this study.

Internal Validity

The validity for the interview data were established by "member checking" (Creswell, 2009, p. 219), and clarifying the researcher's bias. Upon completion of the interview, a transcript was e-mailed to all participants via e-mail to clarify and validate what they had said was accurately transcribed. They had the option to modify or correct the contents if necessary.

Finally, a researcher is not free from his or her own bias from any research. The researcher clarified and was transparent about his own assumptions and other biases in order to solidify the validity of this study.

Researcher Bias

Catholic high school education is very much part of the researcher's experience and work. The researcher attended Catholic school all through his life, beginning from elementary to university studies. He also grew up in a devout and practicing Catholic family. Further, the researcher is a Catholic priest in the Catholic Church. Currently he is ministering to a Catholic community in the Western United States. The researcher's world view has been shaped by his Catholic beliefs, views, values, and practices which are rich in social justice teaching and practice. It is the assumption of the researcher that the Catholic high school education empowers students to be actively engaged in social justice issues in the American society. However, the researcher had been objective in analyzing, interpreting, and presenting the data in order to accurately present the perspectives of young adult alumnae in this study.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is not a graduate of St. Mary's Catholic high school. He is also not associated with the selected school site in any way. The researcher administered the survey through e-mail correspondence and he remained as an unknown person to most participants who completed the survey. Most participants only knew that the researcher is a priest and a doctoral candidate in the department of school of education in a reputed university. No further information about the researcher was disclosed to those who took the survey. The researcher role was to collect the survey data using the standardized procedures.

In the individual interview phase of the study, the researcher assumed more of a personal involvement and participatory role due to the personal contact with the individuals. Though the researcher remained unfamiliar to the participants, during the data collection process from interviews, the researcher developed cordial and supportive relations with some participants. However, he remained as an objective reporter of the data that was collected.

The researcher is a Catholic priest. Since this study is about the impact of Catholic high school education it may be possible that there could be an unintended influence of the researcher's personal beliefs and perceptions which inform the research. However, the researcher was mindful of this reality and was committed to objectively capture the voices of the participants in this study. The researcher used extensive verification procedures such as triangulation of data with survey, interview, and document review to establish the accuracy of the findings.

Timeline

The researcher adhered to the following timeline to complete this research study. The defense of dissertation proposal took place in August, 2011. Survey instruments, interview instruments, and application to the Institutional Review Board took place in October, 2011. The addendum to the survey protocol was obtained from the Institutional Review Board in November, 2011. Administration of the survey took place between December, 2011 to February, 2012. The individual interview and document review took place in February, 2012. The analysis of the survey data, and coding and analysis of the interview data, as well as the analysis of the survey data with the interview data and document review took place in between February and March, 2012. Findings, implications, and recommendations were written from March to

November, 2012. The findings are presented in chapter 4, and implications and recommendations are discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The current mixed methods research study answered the following two research questions that are related to each other. The first research question consisted of three questions which captured the Christian service experiences of young adult alumnae who attended Catholic high school, and the second research question captured the relationship of these experiences to the alumnae's understanding of Catholic social teaching principles, and current engagement in social justice related activities.

Research Question 1:

- (a) What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current beliefs about service?
- (b) What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current engagement in service?
- (c) What is the level of actual service engagement of young adult alumnae who participated in a Christian service program at a Catholic female single sex high school?

Research Question 2: To what extent did young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school believe that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs about and current engagement with Catholic Social Teaching principles?

The findings from this research study are presented in five sections. First, for the purpose of contextualizing the service experiences of the young adult alumnae, findings from the school documents dating to the period from 1998 to 2005 such as the school year books, Western

Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) documents, and Parent and Student Handbooks which present evidence of service opportunities provided to the young adult alumnae during their high school years are presented. Second, the quality of St. Mary's Catholic high school Christian service program as reflected by young adult alumnae is presented using the results from the survey data. Third, the extent to which St. Mary's Catholic high school Christian service program experience influences young adult alumnae's current beliefs about and engagement with service activities is presented utilizing the results from the survey data. Fourth, the impact of St. Mary's Catholic high school Christian service program on young adult alumnae's perspectives regarding four Catholic social teaching principles, (a) Life and Dignity of the Human Person, (b) Care for the Poor, (c) Solidarity and the Common Good, and (d) Rights and Responsibilities is presented utilizing the quantitative survey data as well as the qualitative interview results. Finally, a thematic presentation of the general impact of St. Mary's Catholic high school Christian service program on young adult alumnae is provided utilizing the qualitative interview data as well as the text responses from the survey data.

For the purpose of protecting the identity of young adult alumnae as well as other individuals who are either working at St. Mary's high school currently, or have moved on, pseudonyms have been used to refer to all names of persons, names of centers where students performed service activities, and the names of neighborhood places near to St. Mary's school. Names of places which are significantly distanced from the school were not changed.

Student Service Experiences During 1998 – 2005: Essential Documents

For the purpose of contextualizing the service experiences of the young adult alumnae it

is important to first understand and verify the exact service experiences that were available to them during the period they were in high school. In order to accomplish this, a review of essential school documents related to service, including the school year book from 1998-2005, the WASC and WCEA documents of 1998 and 2004, and the Student and Parent Handbooks from 1998-2005, was conducted. A review of the documents produced during this period when the alumnae were in high school will also corroborate the service experiences shared by them in their interviews with the researcher. But, first it is important to look at the foundational beliefs about service as described in the essential school documents at St. Mary's Catholic high school in-order to better understand the rationale for service and the suggested methods of operationalizing service at St. Mary's.

The Philosophy of Service in Essential School Documents

The belief and the practice of service in Catholic high schools have their roots in the gospel message of serving the less fortunate as proclaimed by Jesus Christ. The document review revealed that the history, philosophy, and mission statements of St. Mary's high school emphasized these foundational beliefs. The school philosophy statement explicitly affirmed these beliefs stating that "the school's philosophy is founded on Catholic values as revealed to us through the gospel message of Jesus Christ" (St. Mary's High School (SMHS), 1998b, p. 4; SMHS, 1998a, p. 61; SMHS, 2004a, p. 3). The school history statement traced the practice of service by the women religious order sisters who established this school based on their foundational values of "serving the needy, orphans, prisoners, women, sick, and the destitute" (SMHS, 2004b, p. 5), and who lived by a charism of "service to the dear neighbor without distinction" (SMHS, 2004b, p. 5). The belief in the philosophy of serving the "dear neighbor" has

also been clearly expressed in the school's mission statement which states, "As a faith community...we share in the mission [of the women religious order] to promote justice, love, and peace for the dear neighbor..." (SMHS, 1998a, p. 64). Later, this belief has been incorporated in to the statement of the school philosophy in order to "assist the [school community] and reflect... the philosophy of serving the dear neighbor" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 3). The WASC and WCEA documents (SMHS, 2004a) further affirm this belief stating that St. Mary's high school is committed to serving the dear neighbor by recognizing that "we are called to reach beyond ourselves to serve a world in need" (p. 31).

In general, the essential school documents suggest that St. Mary's attempted to develop an attitude of service in their students based on the Catholic faith-based belief in the dignity and value of each human person. This was expressed in the school philosophy statement: "We of St. Mary's high school acknowledge the dignity, value, and uniqueness of each student" (SMHS, 2001b, p. iii). Further, the mission statement of St. Mary's also expressed this belief by stating that, "the mission of the school is to enable its students to develop their gifts and abilities, to respect their own and others' dignity..." (SMHS, 2004a, p. 4).

Jesus Christ preached the importance of service, and He served others during his life and ministry on earth, which is emphasized in the Gospels. Catholic high schools hope to instill this spirit of service in their students. St. Mary's high school emphasized instilling this spirit of service in students by stating their expectations of students in their Expected School-wide Learning Results (ESLRs) which stated: "By graduation a student should be 'A Christ-Centered Person' who has a foundation in Catholic teaching...evidences Gospel values, and respects,

values, and serves others - the dear neighbor" (SMHS, 2001b, p. iv; SMHS, 1998a, p. 57; SMHS, 2004a, p. 20).

One of the purposes of instilling the spirit of service in students is to enable them to become involved citizens to serve the needs of the community locally and globally. This belief was expressed as one of the Expected School-wide Learning Results (ESLRs) of St. Mary's high school which states, "By graduation a student should be: A Community Contributor who is an involved citizen...[and] acts as a responsible member of the global community" (SMHS, 2000b, p. iv; SMHS, 1998a, p. 57; SMHS, 2004a, p. 20). In support of this belief, the documents showed that various service clubs at St. Mary's were required to incorporate social and community service. Clubs such as "SADD (Student Against Destructive Decisions), Red Cross, UNICEF, and Amnesty promoted a sense of morality and involvement in the [local and] global community" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 94). Thus, the data showed that the foundational beliefs and statements about service were meant to be a guiding force at St. Mary's high school to develop, organize, and implement many service related organizations and activities.

The Opportunity for Service in Essential School Documents

The students at St. Mary's high school participated in service related activities largely in two ways, by doing service work on campus, and through outreach service programs where students participated in service outside of the confines of the campus.

On campus service. First, within the school community students participated in various service clubs which organized drives such as clothing drives, blood drives, food drives, toy drives, candy drives, fund raisers, letter writings, and petition drives to promote human rights around the world (SMHS, 1999, p. 98; 2000a, p. 96; 2001a, p. 130; 2002a, p. 124; 2003a, p.

111). For example, student participation in a clothing drive was reported in the school yearbook 1999, which captioned a picture stating, "Meredith, Mariel, and Maryjean gather clothes donated by the student body for the tornado victims of Nicaragua. Students often participated in the several charity drives held throughout the year" (SMHS, 1999, p. 9). Another example where service was highlighted appears in the 2000 school year book, which stated in a captioned picture, "Dedicated member, Rosali, offers some of the many bags of dry noodles collected from the Senior Class. Students contributed to this act of charity by bringing in different items during the month of November" (SMHS, 2000a, p. 96). Students donating money was also reported in 2001 (SMHS, 2001a, p. 130) and some students formed a club and became "Peer Helpers" who were available each day, in order to support peers in crisis (SMHS, 2004a, p. 31). Other significant service opportunities found in the essential school documents included: the Red Cross Club, "to promote life, and aide others by providing relief for those in need and in despair" (SMHS, 2001a, p. 134); the HOPE Club (Helping Other People Everywhere), a service-based club that sponsored school-wide service projects, such as monthly trip to a soup kitchen, feeding the poor at a city park (SMHS, 1999, p. 98; 2000a, p. 91; 2001a, p. 130), including a trip to Tijuana to host an Easter party at an orphanage" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 87); the Amnesty International Club because students at St. Mary's high school were "sensitive to the respect of human life and human rights" (SMHS, 2000a, p. 105), and actively worked to promote them around the world, and, at the same time raised the awareness of the school community to situations where human rights were not respected (SMHS, 2004a, p. 31); the Cuddle Club, where students at St. Mary's high school affirmed the value of the human person by caring for abandoned babies (SMHS, 2000a, p. 90; 2001a, p. 120); and the Kiwins-Key Club, an affiliate of

the Kiwanis Club, which organized activities that benefited the local community (SMHS, 2004a, p. 87; 1999, p. 96; 2001a, p. 137).

School-wide service projects. In addition to clubs and affiliation with charitable organizations, the documents revealed that St. Mary's school had provided various school-wide service projects. For example, the entire school community was involved in raising funds to support St. Mary's Center, a multifaceted center in the local area that provided programs to the poor and homeless (SMHS, 2004a, p. 32). In another project involving a detention center for young people, students were involved in collecting hygiene items for the center (SMHS, 2004a, p. 32). And yet in another project, St. Mary's high school had adopted St. Agnes Catholic elementary school, located in a poor inner city area. During Halloween, all students were invited to bring candy to be given to these students at St. Agnes. For Christmas, each class section was given the names of 4-5 students for whom they provided toys (SMHS, 2004a, p. 32).

Off campus service. Students also actively participated in outreach service programs and did active service such as feeding the poor and homeless, working at convalescent homes, helping abandoned children find adoptive families, participating in beach clean-ups, tree plantings, tutoring, volunteering, and Trips to Tijuana to build homes for the poor (SMHS, 1999, p. 115; 2000a, p. 96; 2001a, p. 137; 2003a, p. 105). In order to provide opportunities for students to be community contributors, St. Mary's high school made available resources for "trips to visit retirement homes, parish schools, trips to Tijuana to build homes, and monthly visits to a women's shelter" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 101).

Nature of service. Participation in service was not entirely voluntary at St. Mary's high school during this period; rather, it was a school requirement, mainly through the Christian

service program which was part of the Religion Department. The students of St. Mary's high school were required, as part of their religion class grade, to perform a required amount of service hours in the community. All students had to submit a commitment and an evaluation form that were completed and signed by the supervisor coordinating the volunteer hours (SMHS, 2004a, p. 31). The required service hours varied among the school years. For example in 2001-2002 to 2003-2004 school years, the Freshmen had to complete 10 hours of service, Sophomores had to complete 20 hours, and Juniors and Seniors had to complete 30 hours of service, a total of 90 hours in four years (SMHS, 2001b, p. 32; 2002b, p. 32; 2003b, p. 23). In 2004-2005 school year the Freshmen had to complete 10 hours, and the Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors had to complete 20 hours of Christian service, a total of 70 hours in four years (SMHS, 2004a, p. 31 & 60). However, according to the WASC and WCEA documents, "52% of students do more than the required amount. This totals to over 27,000 volunteer hours in the community" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 96). Further, the data showed that "in the 2002-2003 school year, St. Mary's high school students served in 64 parishes, assisted 37 organizations, offered service in 68 centers and completed their service requirements in over 100 other places. In this year alone, [St. Mary's high school] students completed 27,000 hours of Christian service" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 31).

Rewards of service. Although Christian service was a mandatory program for students, according to the document review, many felt that it was beneficial and rewarding. One senior, Josephine captured the reason behind Christian service when she said, "It feels good to see the kids, which I tutor and help, prosper every time we meet" (SMHS, 2000a, p.10). Another student, a junior, Eva, said: "I don't mind doing Christian Service because it gives me the opportunity to help those who are less fortunate than myself" (SMHS, 1999, p. 9). Yet, another

student Amala, a Senior, said, "I volunteer at many different places, but either way I am helping the community and that is all that matters" (SMHS, 1999, p. 9). Amala contributes her volunteer hours to teaching CCD classes [faith formation classes] at a local Catholic Church (SMHS, 1999, p. 9). Yet another student said "completing my Christian service volunteer work makes me feel good knowing that I am doing something for someone other than myself" (SMHS, 1999, p. 8). And, in another case, the editor of the 2000 school yearbook noted that simple acts of benevolence will produce great triumphs in society. She recounted a personal experience of one student, Fatima. Fatima joined one of Father James's routine class-trips to the Convalescent Home, when a woman named Veronica said that all she really wanted was a McDonald's cheeseburger and fries. The very next day Senior Fatima went afterschool to see Veronica, and greeted her with a warm McDonald's bag (SMHS, 2000a, p. 2).

Review of the documents provided data which revealed that during the years 1998 and 2004, students at St. Mary's high school were provided many opportunities for doing service and participated in service through various on campus and off campus activities in conjunction with the Christian service program. In addition, the documents suggested that students expressed positive feelings about their experience with their service knowing that they had "opportunities to...value and serve others" (SMHS, 2004a, p. 93). These findings are further supported by the results from the young adult alumnae's survey as well as interview data.

The Quality of Christian Service Program and its Impact on Young Adult Alumnae

Research Question 1(a) asked: What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current beliefs about service?

For the purpose of answering this research question, the survey participants were first asked their perspectives about the quality of their Christian service program. It is important to explore student perspective about quality of the program before inquiring about impact of program. In this way, student perspectives about impact can be measured against their perceptions of program quality, which can provide more validity to their analysis of program impact on beliefs about service and service engagement. The following table illustrates the responses of young adult alumnae.

Table 6

Quality of Christian Service Program and Its Impact on Alumnae (N=114)

Survey Question	Responses				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My high school Christian service program...					
(a) Was well organized	2.63%	8.77%	27.19%	50.00%	11.40%
(b) Offered meaningful service opportunities	2.63%	13.16%	24.56%	47.37%	12.28%
(d) Taught me to be a good person	3.51%	3.51%	13.16%	50.00%	29.82%
(e) Exposed me to people with issues unlike my own	4.39%	6.14%	19.30%	43.86%	26.32%

Among the survey respondents to (a) "My high school Christian service program was well organized," the majority of the respondents, 61%, expressed "agree" to "strongly agree" suggesting that the majority of the alumnae participants in this study had experienced a well organized Christian service program at their high school. Under 12% of the respondents

responded “strongly disagree” or “disagree,” and about 27% expressed the neutral position of “neither agree nor disagree.”

For the survey responses to (b) "My high school Christian service program offered meaningful service opportunities, a total of 59.65% respondents indicated "agree” to “strongly agree” suggesting that more than half of the respondents perceived that their Christian service program had provided them with meaningful service opportunities. Less than 16% responded “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” And 24.56% responded that they “neither agreed or disagreed” that their Christian service program provided them with meaningful service opportunities.

For the survey responses to (d) "My high school Christian service program taught me to be a good person," a total of 79.82% reported that they "agree” to “strongly agree" suggesting that a significant majority of the respondents felt that their high school Christian service program experience had taught them to be good persons. Less than 8% “strongly disagreed,” or "disagreed," and only about 13% took a neutral position.

For the survey responses to (e) "My high school Christian service program exposed me to people with issues unlike my own," a total of 70.18% reported "agree” to “strongly agree" indicating that the majority of the respondents felt that their experience with their high school Christian service program had been successful exposing them to people with issues unlike their own. Less than 11% of respondents (10.53%), either “strongly disagreed” or disagreed,” and 19.30% took a neutral position.

Christian Service Program Influence on Alumnae's Current "Beliefs" About, and "Engagement" With Service Activities. [Answers to Research Questions 1 (a) & 1(b)]

This section presents young adult alumnae's current general perceptions about their experience with their high school Christian service program, in relationship to its influence on young adult alumnae's current beliefs about and engagement with service activities. Utilizing the results from the survey data, this section will answer, in part, the research questions 1(a): "What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current beliefs about service?" and 1(b): "What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current engagement in service?" Further, this section will inform later more specific issues that alumnae addressed both in the quantitative and the qualitative data.

Alumnae's Perceptions of Their High School Christian Service Program Influence on Their Current "Beliefs" About Service

This research studied how young adult alumnae's current beliefs about service have been shaped by their Christian service program experience at St. Mary's Catholic high school. A survey question asked about the influence of the high school Christian service program experience shaping young adult alumnae's values: "My high school Christian service program influenced my current values." The survey responses for this question are presented in the following table. A graphical representation of the data is also available in Appendix E.

Table 7

Alumnae's perception of their high school Christian service program influencing their current values (N=120)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My high school Christian service program influenced my current values.	1.75%	6.14%	28.07%	38.60%	25.44%

As seen in the table above, a total of 64.04% respondents reported “agree” to “strongly agree,” suggesting that the majority of the respondents felt that their service experience with their high school Christian service program had influenced their current values. In addition, only about 8% “strongly disagreed” or “disagreed” and 28.07% of the sample neither “agreed” nor “disagreed.” See the figure E1 in appendix E for a visual bar graph.

Further, another survey question asked about the general influence of the Catholic high school Christian service program on young adult alumnae's current beliefs: "To what extent do you think your high school Christian service program influences your current beliefs (e.g. opinions, attitudes, values, etc) about the importance of service?" The responses of the alumnae are presented in the table below. The responses options ranged from "Not at all" to "A Great Deal" with the term "Significant" as the midpoint. This term is not a traditional midpoint indicating a neutral position. As such, participants may have interpreted this term as leaning toward the positive side of the scale, or may have viewed the term as the midpoint of the scale.

While the researcher created the survey items and viewed the term “significant” as more positive, the limitation of using this term instead of a neutral term is that more positive options were available to participants. Participants did not have the opportunity to express a true neutral position for this item and were forced to select from these responses. It is therefore not completely clear as to how participants viewed this response option.

Table 8

Young adult alumnae's current beliefs about the importance of service (N=131)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you think your high school Christian service program influences your current beliefs (e.g. opinions, attitudes, values, etc) about the importance of service?	10.60%	23.60%	26.80%	17.90%	21.10%

Among the respondents, 39% reported that their high school Christian service program experience influenced them from "very significant" to "a great deal." In addition, the survey response of “significant” garnered 26.80 percent. Further, 23.60% of the respondents reported that they were “somewhat” influenced by the Christian service program, and only 10.60% reported that they were "not at all" influenced by it. While it is uncertain as to how participants viewed the term “significant,” if it was interpreted positively, then a majority of respondents (65.80%) reported that their high school Christian service program influenced their current beliefs about the importance of service. If it was viewed neutrally, then 39% of respondents

reported that their high school service program influenced their beliefs. The figure E2 in appendix E presents a visual bar graph for these results.

Alumnae's Perceptions of Their High School Christian Service Program Influence on Their Current “Engagement” in Service

To answer the research question 1(b): “What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current engagement in service?” a survey question asked about alumnae's perspectives about their high school Christian service program influence in general on their current engagement in service: "To what extent do you think your high school Christian service program influences your current engagement (e.g. participation, volunteering, etc) in service activities?" The following table presents alumnae's responses.

Table 9

Alumnae's perception of Christian service influencing current engagement in service (N=131)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you think your high school Christian service program influences your current engagement (e.g. participation, volunteering, etc) in service activities?	15.40%	42.30%	21.10%	5.70%	15.40%

Among the respondents, 42.30% reported that they were "somewhat" influenced to engage in service activities currently. Although “somewhat” is not negative, it is not positioned on the

higher end of the scale. Further, 15.40%, reported that they were "not at all" influenced. Thus more than half of the respondents (57.70%) reported that they were not influenced or weakly influenced by their high school Christian service program to engage in service activities at present. Further, only 21.10% reported that it influenced them from "very significant" to "a great deal," and 21.10% reported it as "significant" which is again, a midpoint on the scale, and not clear if participants viewed this on the positive or negative side of the scale. If this midpoint scale "significant" would lean towards the positive side of the scale, the total respondents who reported that their high school Christian service program influenced their current service engagement from "significant" to "a great deal" rises to 42.20%. See the figure E3 in appendix E for a visual bar graph.

Alternatively, however, one may legitimately assert that all responses from "somewhat" to "a great deal" suggest a type of influence, ranging from less influence to significant influence, which would indicate that a significant majority of 85% of participants believed that their high school Christian service program had an identifiable influence on their current engagement, though to varying degrees. Further analysis will take place in chapter 5.

Frequency of alumnae's current engagement in service. For the purpose of answering the research question 1(c): "What is the level of actual service engagement of young adult alumnae who participated in a Christian service program at a Catholic female single sex high school?" one survey question asked about adult alumnae's participation in service in the past year: "How often have you participated in service during the past 12 months?" The responses of the alumnae are presented in the following table.

Table 10

The young adult alumnae's service engagement in the past 12 months (N=126)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	1-5 times/year	6-10 times/year	11-15 times/year	16 times and above/year
How often have you participated in service during the past 12 months?	33.33%	31.75%	11.11%	7.14%	16.67%

The results revealed that almost one third (33.33%) of the respondents reported that they did not do any service in the past 12 months. Two third of the respondents reported that they participated in service to various degrees, such as, 1-5 times a year (31.75%), 6-10 times (11.11%), 11-15 times (7.14%), and 16 times and above (16.77%). Only 23.81% of the respondents are at what would be considered the “higher end” of the scale who performed service 11 to 16 times and above, which is significantly less than those who did not do service at all (33.33%). However, one of the limitations of the survey responses occurs in the choices provided. The numbers about who engaged in service from 1-5 times a year (31.75%) and 6-10 times a year (11.11%) does not provide enough data to determine the difference between minimum and significant service engagement. While selecting 1-5 times a year does indicate engagement on the lower range of the scale, for some a participation of 5 times a year may be considered significant. In addition, the survey was not able to link frequency of engagement with type of engagement. A sustained service experience of 5 times in a woman’s shelter, for example, is a very different kind of commitment than simply serving as a Eucharistic Minister for 5 Sundays over the course of the

year. Nonetheless, despite the limitation it is clear from the survey data that alumnae are not as committed to engagement in service as they are the idea of service. The 33.33 % who admitted to not participating in service at all is evidence of this. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5. The figure E4 in appendix E provides a visual pie graph for these results.

A follow up open ended question asked the alumnae about the type of service activities they did, if any, in the past 12 months: "If you participated in service in the past 12 months, what was the primary service activity?" Among the 126 respondents ($N=126$) who answered the question if they had participated in the service activities in the past 12 months, about 62% ($n=79$) indicated the types of service they performed in the past 12 months. The following table presents their text responses.

Table 11

Alumnae's types of service engagement in the past 12 months ($n=79$)

Types of Service Engagement	Number of Persons
Church related activities	30
Various volunteer work	15
Feeding the poor, homeless, and less fortunate	12
Donation to various causes	5
Various drives such as clothes, toys, books	5
Tutoring/Mentoring low-income students	5
Community/Health related service	5
Participated in charity walks	3
Fundraising	3
Sports coach / Girls Scout	2
Park / Beach clean ups	2
Volunteer trip to Ghana - served with children rescued from child trafficking	1

Reasons for lack of service engagement. Although the quantitative data does not provide information to understand the reasons for alumnae's participation in or lack of current active engagement in service, the qualitative data sheds light on this issue. Some interview participants have expressed that their current service engagement as insufficient, and gave their reasons. For example, Mary, an interview participant, said that "because of things being very financially difficult" she hasn't been engaging in service. Josephine, another interview participant, said that she has only engaged somewhat because she is "pretty busy at work, so no time." Rose, one more interview participant, said, "Well I am Catholic school teacher, so it's a lot in there. I do a lot of extracurricular activities..., I guess this is my Christian service [laughs out loud], suggesting that she considers what she does in her teaching job is service. Christine, another interview participant, said that she wasn't involved in service but, "I want to be, I'm trying to be. That's my New Year's resolution. It should be a new life change for me. This should be something I should do," suggesting that there is no identifiable reason for not engaging in service.

Christian Service Program Influence on Alumnae Regarding Four Catholic Social Teaching Principles (Answers to Research Question 2)

For the purpose of answering the research question 2: "To what extent did young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school believe that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs about and current engagement with Catholic Social Teaching principles?" the impact of the Catholic high school Christian service program on young adult alumnae's beliefs about and engagement with four Catholic social teaching principles was measured by the survey and interview process completed in this research study.

The results from the survey, both the Likert scale data, the open ended responses, and the results from the qualitative interview data regarding young adult alumnae's perspectives about their experience with the four Catholic social teaching principles and their impact on their current life are presented in this section.

Christian Service Program Influence on Alumnae's "Perceptions" About the Four Catholic Social Teaching Principles

Life and dignity of the human person. One survey question asked young adult alumnae to express their perspectives about the life and dignity of the human person based on the experiences they had with their Catholic high school Christian service program: "To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of respecting all human persons?" Young adult alumnae's responses are presented in the following table.

Table 12

Alumnae's beliefs about the importance of respecting the life and dignity of all human persons (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of respecting all human persons?	6.90%	23.28%	19.83%	19.83%	30.17%

The survey data results revealed that 50.0% reported that their high school Christian service

program experience shaped their beliefs “very significantly” to “a great deal.” However the same limitation occurs in this question as in the previous section. It is not clear whether “significant” which is the midpoint, leans towards the positive side of the scale, or negative. If the midpoint “significant” leans towards the positive side of the scale, the total respondents who reported that their high school Christian service program influenced their beliefs about respecting all persons from “significant” to “a great deal” is 69.83 percent. If the midpoint “significant” is viewed neutrally, then half of the respondents, 50.0%, reported that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs about respect for human persons. In either case, the number of alumnae that felt impacted by the Christian service program is quite strong. Further, 23.28% of the respondents reported that their beliefs were shaped “somewhat,” and only 6.90% reported that they were “not at all” influenced by it. See the figure E5 in appendix E for a visual bar graph.

Care for the poor. For the purpose of allowing young adult alumnae express to what extent they feel that their Catholic high school Christian service program has helped them experience this Catholic social teaching principle, a survey question asked: “To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of serving the poor?” The responses of young adult alumnae are presented in the following table.

Table 13

Young adult alumnae's beliefs about the importance of serving the poor (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of serving the poor?	2.59%	24.14%	25.86%	16.38%	31.03%

The survey data results revealed that 47.41% of the respondents felt that their high school Christian service program experience had shaped their beliefs “very significantly” to “a great deal” regarding the importance of serving the poor. And, if the midpoint of "significant" is viewed positively, then 73.27% indicated that they were positively impacted by their Christian service program. Further, 24.14% of the respondents reported that their beliefs were shaped “somewhat” by the Christian service program, and only 2.59% reported that they were "not at all" influenced by it. Once again, these data reveal a significant positive impact of the Christian service program on student perception of the Catholic social teachings, specifically here in the importance of serving the poor. The figure E6 in appendix E presents a visual bar graph.

Solidarity and common good. Two survey questions asked about the extent to which young adult alumnae felt their Christian service program shaped their beliefs about solidarity and common good respectively. For the survey question, "To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of

expressing your empathy for people with difficulties (e.g., victims of poverty, disease, or disaster)?" the responses are presented in the following table.

Table 14

Alumnae's beliefs about the importance of expressing empathy for people with difficulties (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of expressing your empathy for people with difficulties?	4.31%	18.10%	26.72%	15.52%	35.34%

Here the data results revealed that half of the respondents (50.86%) felt that their beliefs about the importance of empathizing with people in difficulties were shaped "very significantly" to "a great deal" by their high school Christian service program experience. And, if the midpoint of "significant" is included in the positive response category, the percentage increases to 77.58 percent. In addition, 18.10% of respondents felt that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs only "somewhat," and a very small percentage of respondents, 4.31%, felt that they were "not at all" shaped by it. A visual bar graph is presented in figure E7, appendix E, for these results.

A similar survey question asked, "To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of providing basic

necessities, such as food, clothing, shelter, and education?" The survey responses are presented in the following table.

Table 15

Young adult alumnae's beliefs about the importance of providing basic necessities (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of providing basic necessities, such as food, clothing, shelter, and education?	2.59%	20.69%	26.72%	18.97%	31.03%

The data results revealed that 50.0% of the respondents felt that their beliefs about the importance of providing basic necessities for people who lacked them were shaped "very significantly" to "a great deal" by their high school Christian service program experience. If the midpoint of "significant" is included as a positive response, the percentage increases to over 76.72 percent. Further, a minority of the respondents (20.69%) felt that their beliefs were shaped "somewhat," and only a very small percentage of the respondents (2.59%) felt that their beliefs were "not at all" shaped by their high school Christian service program experience. See the figure E8 in appendix E for a visual bar graph that illustrates these findings.

Rights and Responsibilities. Two survey questions asked about the extent to which young adult alumnae felt their Christian service program shaped their beliefs about the rights and

responsibilities of individuals.

One survey question asked about individuals' responsibility: "To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of responding to the needs of the less privileged?" The following table presents the survey responses.

Table 16

Alumnae's beliefs about one's responsibility in responding to the needs of the less privileged (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of responding to the needs of the less privileged?	3.45%	18.97%	28.45%	18.10%	31.03%

The data revealed that 49.13% of the respondents felt that their beliefs about the importance of responding to the needs of the less privileged were shaped "very significantly" to "a great deal" by their high school Christian service program experience. When the midpoint of "significant" is viewed as positive, the percentage increases to over 77.58 percent. In addition, a minority of the respondents 18.97%, felt that their beliefs in this value were shaped "somewhat," and a very small respondents (3.45%) felt that their beliefs in this value were "not at all" shaped by their high school Christian service program experience. The figure E9 in appendix E illustrates these findings with a visual bar graph.

Another survey question asked about young adult alumnae's beliefs about the rights of individuals: "To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of protecting human rights?" The following table presents the responses of the survey.

Table 17

Young adult alumnae's beliefs about the importance of protecting individuals' rights (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at All	Somewhat	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of protecting human rights?	7.76%	21.55%	21.55%	18.97%	30.17%

The survey revealed that 49.14% of the respondents felt that their beliefs about the importance of protecting human rights had been shaped "very significantly" to "a great deal" by their high school Christian service program experience which rises to approximately 71.0% with the inclusion of the midpoint. In addition, 21.55% felt that their beliefs were shaped only "somewhat," and 7.76% felt that they were "not at all" shaped by their Christian service program experience in high school. The figure E10 in appendix E presents a visual bar graph.

Christian service program taught alumnae about Catholic Social Teaching principles. The research data also revealed that the Catholic high school Christian service program has influenced alumnae's general beliefs about Catholic social teaching principles. For

example, a survey question asked about participants' general perspectives regarding the nature of their Catholic high school Christian service program in relationship to its influence on Catholic social principles: "My high school Christian service program taught me about Catholic social principles." The following table presents the responses of the survey.

Table 18

Christian service program taught alumnae about Catholic Social Teaching Principles (N=114)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My high school Christian service program taught me about Catholic social principles.	1.75%	8.77%	31.58%	38.60%	19.30%

Among the respondents, the majority of them (57.90%) either “agreed” or “strongly agreed,” suggesting that Christian service program had taught them about various Catholic social teaching principles, though the 19.30% of “strongly agree” may require further inquiry and the 31.58% who remained neutral also draws our attention. However, a small number of respondents (8.77%) "disagreed," and still a very small number (1.75%) "strongly disagreed," suggesting that in general the Christian service program had taught young adult alumnae learn about the Catholic social teaching principles. A visual bar graph illustrates these findings in figure E11, appendix E.

Christian Service Program Influence on Alumnae's Perception of “Engagement” With the Four Catholic Social Teaching Principles

Six survey questions asked about the extent to which young adult alumnae's high school Christian service program experience has shaped their current engagement in service activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles such as (a) Life and Dignity of the Human Person, (b) Care for the Poor, (c) Solidarity and the Common Good, and (d) Rights and Responsibilities. As the results will show, the link of the high school Christian service program to influence on engagement is weaker than the link to influence on beliefs. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The results from the survey data are presented here together for all six questions related to alumnae's current engagement with four Catholic social teaching principles for the purpose of comparing and contrasting the data which may help to better understand alumnae's current engagement.

Table 19

Young adult alumnae current engagement with four Catholic social teaching principles (N=116)

Survey Question	Alumnae Responses				
	Not at all	Some What	Significant	Very Significant	A Great Deal
To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your current engagement with...					
(a) Activities related to respecting the life and dignity of all human persons.	14.66%	25.86%	18.97%	20.69%	19.83%
(b) Activities related to serving the poor.	13.79%	25.86%	23.28%	15.52%	21.55%
(c) Activities promoting the expression of your empathy for people with difficulties (e.g. victims of poverty, disease, or disaster).	11.21%	25.00%	25.86%	15.52%	22.41%
(d) Activities related to providing basic necessities (food, clothing, shelter etc)	9.48%	25.86%	26.72%	16.38%	21.55%
(e) Activities related to responding to the needs of the less privileged.	11.21%	26.72%	22.41%	18.97%	20.69%
(f) Activities related to affirming human rights.	16.38%	24.14%	22.41%	20.69%	16.38%

As seen above, the results revealed that in general an average of 38.36% of respondents reported that their high school Christian service program experience had shaped them "very significantly" to "a great deal" regarding their current engagement with various activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles. In fact there are no major differences between the response categories of "very significant" to "a great deal" to all six survey questions, and only a minority of alumnae were "not at all" influenced by the Christian service program to engage with

current activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles.

However, if the midpoint of "significant" is viewed as positive, then the data revealed that on an average a majority of respondents (61.63%) reported that their high school Christian service program experience had shaped them "significantly" to "a great deal" regarding their current engagement with various activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles. Thus, though the survey results revealed it is possible that majority of the young adult alumnae believe that their Catholic high school Christian service program experience had shaped their current engagement with activities related to the four Catholic social teaching principles, the link between influence and *beliefs about* Christian service was greater (66% on beliefs , 64% on values, and on average 74% on beliefs about four Catholic social teaching principles) than the link that we see between influence and actual *engagement in* Christian service activities (58% were not at all or weakly engaged, and in the past 12 months 33% were not at all engaged and only 24% are at the higher end of the engagement scale). This comparison will be explored further in Chapter 5.

Further, among the respondents, on an average 25.57% reported that they were "somewhat" impacted, and 12.78% felt that they were "not at all" impacted by their high school Christian service program regarding their current engagement with activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles. However, if we combine the responses of "somewhat" and "not at all," then on an average 38.35% of the respondents felt that the Christian service program shaped their current engagement "not at all" to "somewhat," suggesting that on an average more than one third of the respondents thought that their Christian service program had little or no impact on their current engagement with activities related to four Catholic social teaching

principles. This number requires further exploration. The figures E12 to E17 in appendix E illustrate these findings with visual bar graphs for all six questions individually.

Qualitative Findings on the Impact of Christian Service Program on Alumnae

The impact of Christian service program on young adult alumnae, and their belief and engagement with the four Catholic Social Teaching principles was studied through the qualitative interviews with nine young adult alumnae. The results from the interview data regarding young adult alumnae's perspectives about their experiences are presented here. When quoting the interviewees' perspectives, the initials "S.P." for study participant is used following their pseudonym. It must be noted that the participants for the individual interview were chosen from a self-selected group of individuals (24 volunteers out of 131 survey participants), and thus it is possible that these were actively engaged in service and felt comfortable to talk about it by volunteering to take part in the individual interview. Therefore, the perspectives of the selected interview participants (nine interviewees) about the influence of Christian service program on their service engagement lacks the generalizability to the entire population in this study.

Current Service Engagement and High School Service Experience - A link

During the qualitative portion of the research an interview question was asked to all of the participants: "Do you feel that the Christian service program has influenced your current engagement in service? How so?" All of the interview participants said that their high school Christian service program experience has influenced their current engagement in service. For example, in during our interview, Fatima said:

I can honestly say that when I left St. Mary's high school... and was in college, I still

had the yearning, like the drive in me to still wanting to continue do more things [service]. So I joined organizations that were solely based on service so that I could still continue on with that mission [of service] which St. Mary's high school instilled in me. (Fatima, S.P.)

Another interview participant, Jennifer, responded, "Yes it is, because I think if I hadn't been required to do Christian service, and if I wasn't involved in the clubs, I don't know that I would have started [service], ...and doing it for four years [in high school] just felt natural" (Jennifer, S.P.). She further explained that she volunteered in college, and she is now always looking for opportunity to help others, and she thinks, "It is the result of having done those service projects when I was in high school" (Jennifer, S.P.). One more interview participant, Anna, said:

Definitely, just that one time where I told you, where I handed the man the belt [referring to her high school service experience of giving a belt to a poor man], seeing the joy in his face...was a feeling I want to feel again..., just the joy in his face, I wanted to see that again..., it was something that I wanted to do again, and it made me excited about helping others. And so whenever I volunteer, I hope I can recreate that moment. (Anna, S.P.)

Thus Anna suggested that her high school Christian service experience of seeing the joy on the face of the homeless man, as a result of her service, has influenced her current engagement in service, and she declared, "All the experiences that I've had [with the Christian service at St. Mary's] I will always cherish them, and I realize how important they are in my life now" (Anna, S.P.).

Another interview participant, Rose responded:

I think definitely, because there is something where we had a set of requirements on what we are supposed to do [in Christian service], but going above and beyond is kind of up to the individual, and that's something I do every day with the kids who I work with [now], and even within the curriculum we do a lot of service learning opportunities where I've been trying to instill that [spirit of service] with my children. (Rose, S.P.)

Further, she recalled that she developed her social justice consciousness by learning to respect everyone as equal in her Christian service program, "It was a seed I guess, when I was in high school, and it just kind of gotten bigger and bigger as it went on, and things kind of fell into place, where service led me to what now I'm doing as a teacher" (Rose, S.P.), referring to her teaching about the equality of all human persons to her students. Jane said, "Yes, definitely, my Christian service experience in high school was one of the most profound and empowering experiences in my life..., and having experienced service at the age of 15 or 16, I always wanted to make an impact with my community" (Jane, S.P.), suggesting that her service experience in high school has impacted her current service engagement with her community where she started a non-profit organization. Further, she also said, "The whole Christian service projects were about: how can you make an impact, how can you be of service..., and how can you make a change? So I think that was a very important lesson [I learned] in the Christian service project" (Jane, S.P.).

Amala replied, "Yes, definitely," and explained it:

I think that [high school] was a very impressionable age. Even though the act of service, or the need for serving others was embedded in me before the Christian service at high

school, it definitely impressed upon me that there is a community that wants to keep doing it. You don't feel alone in wanting to do service. (Amala, S.P.)

She further said:

I find myself being youth-oriented in my services, going for the youth population, because I feel like that population has the eagerness that I like in service. And, I think a lot of that came from St. Mary's because a lot of my experience there was for the youth, by the youth, and with the youth. So, that's definitely influenced what I seek now. (Amala, S.P.)

Finally she said, "Although I already had that passion before [for doing service], St. Mary just gave me more of an outlet to execute it" (Amala, S.P.).

Josephine said, "I think so, my service I did in College had a bigger impact than service I did in high school, but what I did in high school kind of got me on the path to keep continuing to serve in college" (Josephine, S.P.). She critiqued that she did service in college mostly with her peers which was very helpful, whereas most of the things she did in her high school was just by herself, "shadowing somebody, or doing something on her own" (Josephine, S.P.), suggesting that when service is done with others as a group, it may have a better impact on students. Thus the interview participants expressed that their current service engagements have been influenced by their experience with the Christian service program at high school.

The Impact of Christian Service on Alumnae's Current "Beliefs" and "Engagement" in Four Catholic Social Teaching Principles (Answers to Research Question 2)

Life and dignity of the human person. The data from the qualitative interview revealed

that young adult alumnae believed in the importance of the life and dignity of all human persons, and further believed that their service experiences were part of that.

Five of the interviewees, Jennifer, Anna, Mary, Amala, and Josephine affirmed their belief that the Catholic high school Christian service program is rooted in the Catholic faith, and that service is done for the less fortunate, or disadvantaged people based on the belief that all are created equally in the image of God and so deserve to be served.

When asked about what values were developed as a result of her high school Christian service experience, Jennifer responded that the biggest thing she learned in Christian service was "the value of human life" and "the appreciation of the differences that we all have" (Jennifer, S.P.). She explained, "There are so many reasons [why I want to serve the less fortunate]. One is, you know, we are all God's children. You feel connected to them at that level, because, He [God] created all of us equally" (Jennifer, S.P.).

Anna, believed that what was most important to the people she served was to let them know that "they matter in some way... that they are human, and they are important" (Anna, S.P.). When asked if her belief about the importance of the human person was influenced by her Christian service experience at St. Mary's Catholic high school, she emphatically answered "Definitely Yes!" (Anna, S.P.). And when asked to explain why she thought it was important for her to let the people she served know they were important, she replied:

My values indicate that every person is God's child and that they are worth a chance.

That they are important in some way. Someone who is homeless, or someone who's in the hospital, or someone who is needy in some way may not feel that [they are important], and they need to be reminded that they are important, and that they are God's

child, and they are equal in His eyes, just like they should be equal in everyone's eyes.

(Anna, S.P.)

On another occasion, Anna made a direct connection between her belief and Christian service, "The fact that everyone is created as equal by God, everyone is God's child...and treating others, like you would want to be treated...all of those play into Christian service" (Anna, S.P.).

Mary expressed that her religion class as well as the service opportunities in high school helped her connect her Catholic faith with service, and helped her see Jesus Christ in those whom she served:

I love the fact that our faith is based on humanity. We are human. Christ totally embodied that, when He wanted us to realize that He is in other people and that is so important. It's seeing Christ in the homeless man in the street. It's seeing Christ in...all people. He created all of us equal... He created all of us in the same way, and we all have Him in us.

It is great to see that in Christian service. (Mary, S.P.)

Another interview participant, Amala, was asked about the values she developed as a result of her high school Christian service experience. She recalled:

I value equality definitely. I definitely feel that way about service. In any given point where I feel, in some way, superior to the person [being served], I kind of put myself back, because I know that's not a healthy way of serving. (Amala, S.P.)

One more interview participant, Josephine, traced her belief in the value and dignity of human persons to her high school Christian service experience stating, "It [Christian service] was the starting point...for the person who is being served, it gives value and dignity as an individual, for

the person who's doing the serving gain a lot from that experience, knowing about other people, other ways of living" (Josephine, S.P.).

The death penalty, intimately related to the issue of life and dignity of the human person, is a controversial issue that is often discussed in public and political discourse. The Catholic Church and its educational institutions argue against it based on their belief in the infinite value of human life, and their claim that God alone has the authority to initiate and end the life of an individual. Moral lessons learned from service and service-related coursework in Catholic high school can promote student awareness about the value of human life and empower them in opposing the practice of death penalty. One interview participant, Josephine, expressed this view when answering to an interview question that asked if she thought her desire to act upon injustice was impacted by her Catholic high school Christian service experience:

We took courses on morality and social justice [as part of Christian service] and there were right answers you know; there were right answers as to how you should feel about the death penalty and things like that, whereas other people who haven't been exposed to those programs, I have noticed, tend to be more like "oh! that's not my business, it doesn't have anything to do with me." But students who did go to Catholic schools like myself recognize right away that's an issue that needs to be addressed. (Josephine, S.P.)

However, none of the participants talked about the most commonly discussed issues related to life and death, such as euthanasia, contraception, and abortion. Considering the significance of these issues to the Catholic social teachings related to respect for life, their omission may be significant. This will be analyzed in Chapter 5.

Though fewer participants had compelling examples of actual engagement, some were clear about its significance. For example, Fatima said that she is currently involved with various activities that promote the life and dignity of the human person:

Currently I help with different types of activities with youth groups that we have at my parish..., I help with walks, or runs for different organizations like the American Heart Association, the Diabetes, and the Lupus foundation because those foundations have all part of my life, because since my mom passed away from heart failure, I wanted to gather people to really raise funds for the American Heart Association. I continuously encourage those around me to help with different walks, and donating gifts. (Fatima, S.P.)

And another interview participant, Jennifer, said that she visited an elderly lady once a week, as part of a service program in a nearby hospital (Jennifer, S.P.) and Anna said that she is currently involved with visiting the children's hospital (Anna, S.P.).

Care for the poor. One of the interview participants, Jane, stated that she considered the poor and homeless as an extension of herself, a human person. When asked why she believed it was important for her to serve the poor and homeless as part of her high school Christian service program, she answered:

If you really think about it, if you look at that person and say, you know that's an extension of me, that someone...my gosh I get so emotional [expresses in whispering voice, almost shedding tears, and stumbling for words due to emotions], like, that's, you know, has the part of your spirit in there, you know...an extension of humanity, well, you can't just ignore that... (Jane, S.P.)

Thus Jane believed that serving the poor and homeless "was very noble, a very honorable cause" (Jane, S.P.), and she agreed that this belief has been influenced by her Christian service program experience at her high school, "It definitely helped me, or influenced me, my Christian service" (Jane, S.P.).

Serving the poor and homeless can offer various experiences for students at Catholic high school. Mary, an interview participant, believed that it offered her and her classmates a personal inner transformative experience. She recalled that in her Christian service program at St. Mary's Catholic high school, Fr. James took her entire class to feed the poor and homeless in an inner city homeless area, an opportunity which she did not have before, and in-fact she was "kind of hidden from that experience" (Mary, S.P.) by her protective parents, and by the privileged safe Catholic high school environment. Therefore she said, "I was given such an opportunity when we went to feed the homeless...it was such an amazing experience for me as well as for so many members of our class" (Mary, S.P.), suggesting the transformative experience of service. Mary recalled a concrete example of how one of her classmates was so emotionally taken up by the plight of the poor and homeless such that she even gave out the expensive shoes she was wearing:

There was a girl in my class who... was very emotional that day. She took her shoes off her feet and gave it to the homeless man, a \$200-pair of shoes! You couldn't wipe the smile off her face. And, that experience totally changed her life. Two years later, in senior year, she was still talking about it. It was such an experience being there with the homeless people, serving them, praying with them and for them. (Mary, S.P.)

The belief in the importance of giving to the poor and homeless was expressed by one interviewee, Anna. She said that as part of her high school Christian service program, she took clothes and other necessities to help the homeless under the bridges in a nearby inner city area, and she considered it as the "most memorable Christian service activity" (Anna, S.P.) she did in her high school. She said that, "giving was more than receiving. The gift of giving to others is much more important than any other gift that you can possibly get..." (Ana, S.P.). She further clarified that it is not just giving material things to the poor and homeless, but it is rather "serving and giving of yourself to others...in everyday life. It doesn't have to be monetary, or giving them of your possessions; it's more of letting them know that they matter in some way and giving them your time" (Anna, S.P.). Anna believed that expressing genuine love and respect for the poor and homeless is an important value she learned in her Christian service program at St. Mary's high school.

Anna also expressed this belief when asked if she thought that the values she learned from her high school Christian service program experience influenced her social justice consciousness. She said:

I guess specifically in the time going to the inner city homeless area, I feel that it specifically taught me not to judge others, taught me that they [poor and homeless] are just having a hard time in life. And, you know, a lot of people think that they are druggies, or they are lazy, and that they don't have the job because they are lazy, but in reality each have their own story, and they are there for a reason, and you know, they might be in a slump in life, but that doesn't mean that you can judge them. I guess that's what I learned in that specific experience, helping the homeless. (Anna, S.P.)

Anna believed that it is important to serve the poor and homeless without judging them in any way.

Participants also expressed ways that they believed their Christian service experience influenced their engagement in serving the poor and the less fortunate. For example, Anna said that she and her husband "collect used clothes, and take them to women's shelters, also with toys [for the poor children]" (Anna, S.P.). She said that they do it as a family once a year. She further said that they "go to a city near U. S. A. border to visit the orphanage every year and spent time with the kids there" (Anna, S.P.). Another interview participant, Jane, said that her high school service experience "at a hospital, soup kitchen, and feeding the poor and homeless under the bridges in a nearby inner city" (Jane, S.P.) influenced her current service activities such as "helping out in the soup line on Thanksgiving and Christmas, or on the weekends in a nearby inner city" (Jane, S.P.). Fatima said that she currently helps with different types of activities with youth groups at her parish church, motivating them to "gather people to help with donations for Christmas gifts for the poor" (Fatima, S.P.), and she is also currently engaged in helping with different service organizations such as Project Shepherd which initiates "food drives, cloth drives, and toy drives for the poor kids" (Fatima, S.P.). And, Amala, reported that she is currently engaged in work with the soup kitchen.

Solidarity and the Common Good. Solidarity and the Common Good has two layers. First, solidarity begins as an inner attitude and is eventually expressed through a commitment of doing what one can to the well-being of individuals who are affected by poverty, disease, or disaster (Massaro, 2000, p. 121). Secondly, common good is about improving the lives of others by whatever contributions one can make (Pope John XXIII, 1961). The first requires an intimate

engagement with the victims of injustice, or disaster. The second is less specific, and simply asks that individuals "improve the lives of others," which broadens the contribution to include more personal engagement but also more impersonal ways of contributing through simple donations, or gifts. Examples of both of these were seen in the activities of the participants.

One way students express their solidarity at Catholic high school is through fundraisers for victims of disease, or disaster. All the interview participants said that they were involved with fundraising activities at their high school. For example, Fatima, an interview participant recalled, "Within the school I did different activities...like raising money for different disaster reliefs..." (Fatima, S.P.). Another interview participant, Christine, recalled "We had many fundraisers... I remember when there was someone sick...we did fundraisers for those students' families" (Christine, S.P.). Christine acknowledged that many of the fundraisers, or walkathon were organized by the school administration rather than organizing them as students' voluntary initiatives. When asked if she was happy to participate in those fund raising activities, even though they were planned by her school administration, she replied, "Yes, I did because ... sometimes we would all feel disengaged" (Christine, S.P.) from those who needed help. Further, she said that she and a lot of the girls at St. Mary's high school were focused on sports, and other competitions, and "forgot the value of helping someone else" (Christine, S.P.) who was in need. However, the fundraisers activities made Christine realize the importance of expressing solidarity with those who are in need, "I always felt that every time when we all participated in something, a fundraiser, or some sort, it brought our community together again, our school, and I felt happy knowing my help will benefit someone in need" (Christine, S.P.).

Another way to express solidarity is to empathize with those who have been disadvantaged. Jennifer believed that empathizing with disadvantaged people made her a "better person" (Jennifer, S.P.). She recalled that she was involved with Kiwanis club at her high school as part of Christian service, and visited senior citizen's homes and women shelter centers. These experiences taught her to empathize with them:

Through this experience you see what it is like to be older, and alone, and not really happy when people will not visit you; what it likes to be someone of your age [high school age] who are struggling because they have a child, or they are pregnant, and you really empathize with them in that situation, and I think that carries over when you are older. (Jennifer, S.P.)

Expressing empathy in solidarity with the disadvantaged people is not just a status of expressing one's feeling, rather it is a desire to do something about their condition. Jennifer believed that she experienced this through Christian Service.

Common good and environment. The belief in the common good may be expressed by one's care for the environment. Jane expressed this view when asked to critique her experience with the Christian service program at her high school. She said that although it is very important to care for the well being of another human being, it is also important to care for the "environmental issues" (Jane, S.P.) because:

It helps humanity to be conscious of the gifts, even the natural gifts that are given. So, of course humans are most important, and we should cherish that, but I think the bigger picture is that by caring for our planet. The planet is also a gift. By caring for the planet, you are also caring for one another. (Jane, S.P.)

Thus Jane suggested that caring for the environment is indeed an expression of one's care for the wellbeing of each and every individual in and around the world.

Participants also discussed ways that their engagement in issues of solidarity had been influenced by their Christian service experience. Jane said that she is currently working as a volunteer coordinator in a non-profit organization. She has also started a nonprofit community organization which is all about, "neighbors helping each other" (Jane, S.P.), and the members of this organization are engaged in "helping a community member with house repair work, or landscaping, or help a local church with its landscaping" (Jane, S.P.). Amala, said that she recently went to Cambodia and worked with "disadvantaged children" (Amala, S.P.). She worked with a non-profit organization that is trying to help children pair with the masters to learn the indigenous arts so that they won't die off, and it also could give the disadvantaged children "a vocation, or a career path" (Amala, S.P.).

Rights and Responsibilities. One of the ways students at Catholic high school indicated that they promoted awareness about respecting the rights and responsibilities of individuals by private and governmental institutions is through letter writing and signature campaigns in order to initiate changes in inhumane policies and practices. Jane said that she didn't have too much luck in "reaching out to officials and trying to get actual policy change" (Jane, S.P.) during her high school years, but that she had at least done "letter writing campaigns, and signing petitions" (Jane, S.P.), and she considered it as an important action towards promoting respect for individuals' rights. She further expressed that "there are always choices in one's daily life" (Jane, S.P.) not to support human right violations. For example, "If you know there are inhumane practices done against a person [by a company, or government], you try not to support that

company, or that government" (Jane, S.P.). She also believed in the importance of "engaging people in to discussion, and not being afraid to talk about issues [that violate the rights of individuals]" (Jane, S.P.), suggesting that it is important to take courage to voice against all forms of human right violations. When asked if these beliefs were influenced by her Catholic high school Christian service program experience, she responded, "Yes, definitely... the whole Christian project was all about how can we make a difference in someone's life" (Jane, S.P.), and to act against inhuman policies and practices and thus making better the victims' lives.

Sometimes the human tendency is to pass on the responsibility to someone else such as governmental and non-governmental organizations to take care of those in need of help. Mary, believed that each individual has a moral responsibility to take care of his or her neighbor, and she learned about this belief in her Christian service program with Fr. James at St. Mary's high school:

As Fr. James showed us, by taking us to serve the poor and homeless, it's not about changing laws, or forcing people to follow things. It's about "us" looking out for the individual. It's about "us" looking out for each other and for the less fortunate. It's not about government taking care of the persons. The government is not going to do nearly as good a job... They are not going to help the person as good as the individual will. (Mary, S.P.)

Mary believed that individuals cannot pass on one's responsibilities to an organization, or government, but rather personally get involved in respecting and promotion individuals' rights to provide basic necessities that will make their life more human.

A similar belief was expressed by Jane, an interview participant, when asked about lessons learned from her Christian service experience at St. Mary's high school. She responded saying, "The most important one, I think, when I look back, is that we are accountable for each other" (Jane, S.P.), suggesting that everyone has a moral responsibility for the wellbeing of another human person. Additionally, Jennifer said that we have a "social responsibility" (Jennifer, S.P.) in promoting and protecting individuals' rights because we are all God's children, and we have "the [moral] duty to serve the other people" (Jennifer, S.P.), thus emphasizing the importance of individuals' responsibility for the well being of the less fortunate people.

Interviewees discussed ways in which their engagement with issues of rights and responsibilities were influenced by their high school Christian service experience. One of the ways the participants engaged in promoting awareness about respecting human rights was through "petitioning" to change dehumanizing policies and practices, Jane initiated "letter writing campaign, and signing a petition" (Jane, S.P.). Amala felt it was her responsibility to do something about the disparity of the wealth between the rich and poor. In her recent trip to Cambodia she tried to educate the children from wealthy families regarding the disparity of wealth and, their responsibility to care for the poor children in their neighborhood:

We toured some of the kids of the wealthier families around the dumping sights where a lot of the orphans live... just to create awareness of what's really going on because there's a great disparity of wealth, and the wealthy don't necessarily know what's going on in the flip side of their country. (Amala, S.P.)

Sometimes responsibility does not necessarily mean a passive giving of one's wealth to the less privileged, rather it is empowering the privileged to continue to actively work for the

wellbeing of the less privileged. Amala did this in her trip to Cambodia. According to her, in Cambodia, the students didn't have any student organizations at schools, no student council, and no clubs. Although a lot of kids are learning visual and performing arts from the masters, they have no organization that helps them bring their talents to the public. So, what Amala did was "pair the wealthy kids who spoke English with the less economically advantaged kids who did not speak English and created clubs and concerts for them, so when she left, the kids from the wealthier high schools will know how to organize"(Amala, S.P.) in order to help the less privileged students.

Emergent Themes Related to the Impact of Christian Service on Alumnae Beliefs and Engagement

Coding of the qualitative data makes clear that there are several important themes that emerged and need to be called out for specific exploration. Students praised the program for its transformational qualities, but were also somewhat critical of program administration and organization. The following section will address both positive and negative emerging themes, beginning with those that are more positive perceptions and then moving to those that address most critical perceptions of the program. This data was collected from both free responses included on the survey, and interviews of alumnae conducted as part of this research study

Overview: Alumnae's service experience perceptions. In general, St. Mary's Catholic high school young adult alumnae expressed positive perceptions about the impact of their Christian service program had on them. One respondent said, "My Christian service experience was the single most important part of my Catholic education..." (Survey, text response). Another young adult alumna recalled that "the quality of the Christian Service Program at St. Mary's

Catholic high school was meaningful as it built a foundation of understanding about what it meant [for her] to give back to the community" (Survey, text response). One alumna expressed that her high school Christian service "was a valuable experience that reinforced in her an attitude that she should care for her fellow humans and not just think of her own needs" (Survey, text response). A similar perception was expressed by another respondent who said that the Christian service program was "a good way for students to get out of their shell and experience another aspect of life" (Survey, text response). Another alumna recalled that her "Christian Service Program experience as a student was stellar" and she was "proud to be a part of a school that focuses its mission on serving the dear neighbor" (Survey, text response). "The integration of Christian service in high school really sets up teens to a lifetime of service" (Survey, text response) was expressed by one young adult alumna. And, in relation to this perception, another alumna said that her high school Christian service experience was the reason why she "continued doing community service in college and even today" (Survey, text response). One more alumna reported that service reminded her to appreciate her blessings, "It reminded me of what I had that other's did not, humbled me and made me think outside of my own box" (Survey, text response). Further, five respondents reported that their high school Christian service program experience taught them learn about the value of service, and become selfless givers. One alumna reported, "The Christian service program at SMHS [St. Mary's high school] taught me the importance of helping others" (Survey, text response). Another alumna reported, "It [Christian service] simply taught me to be selfless and give/help our neighbors in need" (Survey, text response). Yet another alumna reported, "I learned [in Christian service] the value of helping someone in need, of any kind" (Survey, text response). One more respondent reported, "It [Christian service]

taught me that even a little bit of help at times can make a bigger difference than you think" (Survey, text response). Finally, one more respondent reported that Christian service helped her "form an understanding of what it meant...by helping those in need, or less fortunate" (Survey, text response). These five young adult alumnae reported that their experiences with their high school Christian service program taught them about the value in helping others, and developing an attitude of selfless giving.

The interview participants also echoed these perceptions about the impact of Christian service. For example, Christine expressed "service is very powerful to change your life and someone else's" (Christine, S.P.). Fatima said that service is "life fulfilling" (Fatima, S.P.). And, Rose shared that her Christian service program was a good one that taught students to get out of "what can I get" type of attitude and develop "what can we do" type of habit (Rose, S.P.). Further, Jane felt that Christian service was "enriching and empowering" (Jane, S.P.), and Anna felt that Christian service taught her the "importance of giving [one's time and treasure]" (Anna, S.P.). Jennifer felt that Christian service enabled her to "appreciate the differences we all have" (Jennifer, S.P.), while Amala asserted that St. Mary's high school made the "message of Christian service more easily approachable" (Amala, S.P.).

An important impact of high school Christian service experience is to free oneself from self absorption and become conscious of the needs of others and serve them. This experience was narrated by Jane:

It [conscious of the need to serve] is a very important thing for me personally because... if it's not around you, if you don't have the opportunity to serve, sometimes you get very self-absorbed. So, being conscious of it, and being reminded of it at that [high school] age

was really important. It made me want to constantly and consciously seek out what more is there to do, and how can I serve. And, it is the act of service that has become very important to me because, being in conscious of the need, you know that there's a gap out there. (Jane, S.P.)

Service as transformational. According to the respondents, Christian service experiences can guide an individual towards life transformation. For example, for the open ended survey question that asked the young adult alumnae to provide additional information about the quality of their high school Christian service program, one alumna reported that her Christian service activities of feeding the homeless under the bridges of a nearby inner city as well as helping the single mothers at a women shelter home were "life changing" events, and she is so appreciative of the wonderful opportunity given to her by St. Mary's Catholic high school (Survey, text response). Further, an interview participant, Fatima, also expressed this view. According to her, "service is life altering" (Fatima, S.P.) because when she decides to do service, she does not do the easiest thing, rather she wants to do something that really makes a difference in someone's life, or in a group of people's lives. According to her, the Christian service activities at St. Mary's high school such as helping a single mother at a women's shelter, feeding the homeless, volunteering to teach religion class, praying with a senior citizen who is dying, and raising funds for the victims of natural disaster can make a difference in someone's life. And "you know in your heart that you didn't do them because you had to, but because your heart told you, and this is life altering" (Fatima, S.P.). Mary felt that "hands-on service experiences" (Mary, S.P.) provide life changing transformation. For example, she took part in AIDS [Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome] awareness walk, and donated clothes for the poor in her high

school, but they didn't mean much to her because it wasn't about "giving of yourself perse" (Mary, S.P.). But when she went to feed the poor and homeless in a nearby city which was "hands-on experience," and that is what "changed her life and opened up her heart and mind" (Mary, S.P.).

Service as empowerment. Service experiences can be empowering for an individual to realize that she can do something for the needy in the society, and make a difference. One interview participant, Jane, expressed this belief:

There's always a call to action... The whole Christian service projects were about how can you make an impact, how can you be of service, and I think for a lot of people it was like how can you make a change, or you make something better, or a situation better whether that's volunteering at a hospital or even if you're doing very mundane things, but I feel that your are ultimately helping the overall cause. So I think that was a very important lesson in the Christian service project, just letting me as a youngster know that I could do something. (Jane, S.P.)

Although some students may not realize the value of service initially, they can have transformative experience when they begin to do service. Jane recounted this experience:

My Christian service experience in high school was probably one of the most profound and empowering experiences in my life. I don't think I realized that in the beginning when we first started, it seemed like something you just had to do, and I wanted to pick something easy to do saying to myself oh! I don't want to work that hard, and then as I got deeper into it as the years went on, I tried to pick projects that really had an impact, or were very challenging to me emotionally, or physically. (Jane, S.P.)

Jane recalled that her efforts were not easy, but because she wanted to grow as a person, she challenged herself in her Christian service activities in high school, and those service experiences as a young person made her feel really in touch with other people, and also "feel very empowered to make the world a better place" (Jane, S.P.). Another interview participant, Amala, recalled, "As far as my own experience...coming from a same-sex Christian service experience, I felt, as a young woman, very empowered...thinking that I can do it [service]" (Amala, S.P.).

Service and career choice. According to the respondents, the Christian service experience at high school can sometimes influence students to pursue certain career choices. For a free response survey question, one respondent reported, "Through my high school Christian Service Program, I learned that I wanted to pursue a career working with children" (Survey, text response). Further, another respondent reported a similar view in an another free response survey question, "My [Christian service] experience of volunteering at an inner-city hospital made me more aware of inequality in health and receiving health services, which is something I am interested in studying in the future" (Survey, text response). Christian service experiences can sometime clarify the meaning of one's life, and influence a career change. Jane, one of the interview participants shared her feeling and experience of career change:

Since high school there were other things, like sort of feeling that even when I wasn't involved in the nonprofit world, there was that kind of feeling of the need to serve; and so, even just helping out in the soup line on Thanksgiving and Christmas in a nearby famous entertainment city, or [helping in the soup kitchen in general] in the weekends were fulfilling. When I was in the entertainment industry, there was a need to do

something else, because it still felt empty, you know, I just felt very superficial. (Jane, S.P.)

The feeling of emptiness had made Jane to change her career. She expressed this while answering to an interview question that asked if she felt that her current engagement in service was influenced by her Catholic high school Christian service program experience. Her answer was, "Yes! definitely" (Jane, S.P.), and she proceeded to explain:

"I feel like since that [Christian, service experience] happened to me probably at 15, or 16, I always wanted to make an impact with my community, and so, when I chose my...when I was in a career where that [Christian, service] lesson part was off my career, it felt like I was missing something, like it was empty, and so after a few years of doing that, I really knew that I had to make a career choice that reflected that desire to serve, and the desire to make the world a better place." (Jane, S.P.)

Another interviewee, Anna, said that she went on a field trip to a border city of USA and a neighboring county as part of St. Mary's high school Christian service project. She said that she helped with the ongoing building of a school for the poor children in that city and was deeply touched by that experience, and she decided to "major in Psychology because she wanted to help others" (Anna, S.P.), suggesting that she wanted to understand the science of human personalities that will be helpful with her career interest of wanting to help others.

The absence of service in one's life can sometimes make that person feel disconnected from the rest of the community. Josephine expressed this feeling, "In times of my life when I have been engaged in a lot of service, like in my high school, and in times that I haven't, I feel

more disconnected, kind of on my own, maybe a little more depressed. I don't feel like I fit in, or connected to other people" (Josephine, S.P.).

Service offers freedom from material things. The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) study by Astin et al., (2002), and Pryor et al., (2007) found that the trend among college students in recent times is to value material things over developing a meaningful philosophy of life. Catholic high school Christian service programs hope to reverse this trend in students by instilling the value of service. One interview participant, Christine, reflected how her high school Christian service experience impacted her with this attitude. Answering an interview question regarding what lessons she learned from her participation in Christian service, she responded saying, "I learned that it's better to give than to receive" (Christine, S.P.), and she proceeded to explain that she was sorry to say that, because she and many of her classmates were financially well off, they "were little...spoiled, and didn't really value some [meaningful] things in life" (Christine, S.P.), instead, [when in high school] they were consumed with material things:

I think we just thought of oh! I want this, I want this, but it's always want. It was always wanting, and I realized that after I had gone to the soup kitchen and prep food, and I was seeing young mothers pushing their babies in a stroller in 40° weather in the winter, it is a kind of like you really just open up your eyes and realize that it's not about material things, it's about, just even the thought, and the concept of just giving your time, and letting these unfortunate people know that we think about them, and that we care about them. That is important. (Christine, S.P.)

Further, a probing question was asked to Christine to explain why she thought it was important for her, and she replied:

Just because I knew Jesus served throughout his life. Money was never [the focus of] His teachings. In our world we have that all the time [focus on money], and money has become the root of everything, and so, I think it's important to serve because I think everybody needs to know that they are appreciated somehow, ...that they're being loved... (Christine, S.P.)

Thus Christine suggests that the attitude of service works counter to the materialistic and consumerist attitudes of individuals in society where "not everyone feels appreciated, not everyone thinks they have a place in this world" (Christine, S.P.), particularly those who are marginalized.

Another interview participant, Fatima, also expressed a similar view. Fatima said that through her Christian service experience at St. Mary's, she learned the lesson that "she is changing someone's life, even for a moment, and the service at St. Mary's high school is key...; serving the dear neighbors is always what's important, and that should be the center of one's life" (Fatima, S.P.). When I asked why she thought that service should be the center of one's life, she responded:

I feel that so many young people now a days, are consumed in the world of media, materialistic things, and they forget that there are bigger things out there than having the greatest of every material thing, and they forget that there are people out there who need...our help. (Fatima, S.P.)

Materialistic tendencies lead to selfishness (Watts, 2008), but service opportunities could change its course. Christine expressed this belief, "I sometimes feel selfish, and I realize that I have to stop thinking about myself and think of other people. Service is therapeutic for me [to do it]"

(Christine, S.P.). Jane also shared a similar view, "If you don't have the opportunity to serve, you get self absorbed" (Jane, S.P.). Fatima concurred with this belief saying that if service experience is provided for students at a younger age such as in high school, they will "take that [experience] on for the rest of their life, as she did" (Fatima, S.P.) and pursue a life of selfless service to others.

Service and spirituality. A foundational belief about service to others in Catholic high school Christian service program is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ who taught that serving the poor and the needy is serving Him: "Whatever you did for one of the least brothers [and sisters] of mine, you did for me" (Mt. 25: 40, *The New American Bible*, 1970). One interview participant, Josephine, expressed this belief and indicated that she learned much about service through the life of Jesus and through the Bible. She said, "Serving others is a way to serve God... I feel more spiritually nourished and closer to God and I think I have a deeper understanding of my faith [when I serve]" (Josephine, S.P.). When asked how she was spiritually enriched, she answered, "I think you encounter God in others... And so, if you ignore other people you're kind of ignoring that opportunity to get to know God through the other person" (Josephine, S.P.).

Another interview participant, Rose, also expressed a similar view. Rose said that she learned about a connection with her faith through her Christian service program:

You feel good, when you do help somebody; but it's something where you know you are contributing to something that's greater than yourself, and it's also a connection to God. You know it's not just about you and the other person, but there's a greater good..., a greater Being... (Rose, S.P.)

Rose believed that serving others is a way to connect with God, providing spiritual enrichment for one's life. Mary made a connection between her faith and service to the poor and homeless. Mary said that as part of her high school Christian service program, she went to feed the poor and homeless under the bridges in a nearby inner city, and was "transformed by that experience" (Mary, S.P.). When asked to explain what she meant by "transformed," she made a connection between her faith and service to the poor and homeless:

I think it is important to our faith to help others. I think that was one of the whole missions of Christ's work: to help the poor. Poverty is never going to be solved.

Homelessness is never going to be solved..., but I do believe that the critical element of being a Christian is service to the poor... Christ really wanted us to help others... (Mary, S.P.)

The belief that the spirit of service leads to an enriched quality of life was expressed by Josephine:

I think you learn about yourself and your faith through serving others. I think it leads to a richer quality of life just all around. I mean serving is more than just service hours, you can serve by caring for an elderly relative, or through your career you can take on roles and positions where you're serving others and I think that's hugely important for a healthy spiritual life and just a healthy, like, a sense of balance for a person to have. (Josephine, S.P.)

Servant leadership. An effective leader is one who serves others, one who becomes the other centered person. This belief was expressed by one interview participant, Jane:

I believe that it's the best way to be a leader, being a servant, and I think I got that idea from my high school days, like the greatest leaders are actually the greatest servants, and that you're not there for yourself therefore [but for] the people that you're trying to lead.

You're actually not trying to lead, you're trying to serve the best you can. (Jane, S.P.)

Jane believed that servant leadership takes the "ego away, and it takes vanity away" (Jane, SP), and it's all about the service, and about the other person. She considered that it is actually such a gift to focus on serving others. This is what has enriched and empowered her life. Jane compared that the common understanding of a leader in the American society is being in-charge, whereas the Christian service at her high school taught her differently:

If you just look at the outside world you are taught that a leader is all about making your mark, being in charge. But, it was when I was doing the Christian service project, it was like, gosh! you know, I mean this is real strength, this is real leadership, and compassion is being here with people that need the help... (Jane, S.P.)

Servant leadership considers that service should not be about the giver being better off to give and the receiver being made to feel less privileged. It is rather about affirming that those receiving service are equal human persons who are in need of help. This belief was expressed by Josephine:

I think one of the things I learned after high school but it probably stemmed from high school was that ... you do things *for* other people, and as I got older it changed to you do them *with* other people, like you work with others. You are not going in because you're better to do something for them, but you're working with them, and that makes it for me a lot more meaningful and enjoyable. (Josephine, S.P.)

High school setting and service aspirations. Youniss, McLellan, Su, & Yates, (1999) demonstrated that involving young people in service contributes to positive identity development during an opportune development period, which is understood as the period where the internal and external conditions help students to learn and develop social justice consciousness. The high school setting provides this opportune time, which Youniss et al. (1999) affirm. High school years are the adolescent period for students, and they begin to think and act independently on their own (Kohlberg, 1963, 1976, 1984). Service opportunities during this time period can help high school students to begin developing values and finding meaning by doing service. Josephine, one of the interviewees, expressed this belief when she compared her service experience at her Catholic elementary school with her service experience at her Catholic high school. According to her, she did service projects at her Catholic elementary school mainly due to the external influence such as family and teachers, but when she was in high school, she developed it as more of an independent choice. In her words:

When you're in high school, you start to develop a more independent sense of who you are. When you're in elementary school and if your parents do service projects, you do it with them. But in high school you have more of the freedom to choose for yourself based on the values you consider as important. (Josephine, S.P.)

Josephine believes that having a service program for students at the high school age, even if its required, is good because it allows students to have those experiences, and then hopefully in the future they will continue to engage in service. Josephine recalled that she knew a lot of people who have continued to do service in the future because "they found value in those experiences."

(Josephine, S.P.). Further, Josephine said that high school life can be challenging, and service experience can be nurturing in the midst of those challenges:

High school can be awkward, and you can feel left out, and you don't fit in. Sometimes doing service projects, or working with others can be nurturing in a way... It can teach you about yourself and about others, and I think that's the time in your life that you are trying to figure out who you are. (Josephine, S.P.)

Students at high school age can sometimes be worried about unimportant concerns and desires. Service opportunities can help them realize and influence them to believe that there is more to life than those insignificant aspirations. One interview participant, Jane, captured this reality, "I think it is important to be conscious of the need for service, I think that was really a valuable lesson to learn in high school age" (Jane, S.P.). According to her, for students during their high school time, it's very easy to slip into kind of "melodrama" (Jane, S.P.) as they are growing as a young adult, and the life lessons that they are learning everyday may seem to be so magnified, such as, "this friend is mad at me, or this boyfriend is mad at me, or I like him, he doesn't like me, or whatever it is; I didn't get this part of the play, or I wanted to be the captain in this sport" (Jane, S.P.), and all of those drama in high school can really take over students' life. But, according to Jane, the Christian service was an anchor to help students realize that there is much more to life than these daily concerns:

It was really great to have an anchor [Christian service] and a reminder that there is so much more to the world than your personal day-to-day trials and tribulations. There's a greater need out there, and you know, there is something bigger than you, and there's

more to life than just, you know, the small insignificant things that we sometimes make very important. (Jane, S.P.)

Further, Josephine affirmed this view by saying that students and teachers in Catholic high school share "similar values" (Josephine, S.P.), and they are often free to discuss and share them with others which "gets you thinking and going on that track towards serving others for a lifetime" (Josephine, S.P.). She further stated, "People I know who did go to Catholic high school tend to do more service as adults" (Josephine, S.P.) suggesting that Catholic high school setting, with its Christian service program, provides opportunities for students to learn the importance of service, develop personal values and meaning, and nurture their aspirations to engage in service activities.

Program Weaknesses: Alumnae Perceptions

Although most young adult alumnae expressed positive perceptions about their experience with their high school Christian service program, some did express dissatisfaction about it. For example, the text responses to two open ended survey questions that were mentioned earlier revealed five respondents reporting that the Christian service program at their high school was "disorganized" (Survey, text response). This perception relates to another young adult alumna who expressed that the Christian service program did not really instill in her the overall importance of service other than forcing her to fulfill the requirement. She expressed, "I did it [service] because I had to. I don't even remember what I did for my service" (Survey, text response). Further, at least one alumna expressed that "the ideals of Christian service helped shape her values, but the actual program itself did not help her with finding service opportunities [during her high school years]" (Survey, text response). Another young adult alumna expressed

that all of her education and beliefs about service came from her participation in service activities at her Church, suggesting that the Christian service program at her high school did not impact her (Survey, text response). Interestingly, about five young adult alumnae did not recall that there was a service program at all at St. Mary's Catholic high school which resonates with another alumna's perception that "when she thinks about high school, service is not the aspect that sticks out the most in her memories" (Survey, text response) suggesting that for some of the alumnae the Christian service program did not make a strong impact. In order to address this situation, one respondent recommended that if she had been asked to do "service at one location all four years" (Survey, text response), then she might remember the service she did, and the lessons and values she learned from those high school service experiences.

Implementation. Several interview participants also expressed negative perceptions about the implementation of the Christian service program. For example Anna expressed that she would have preferred more guidance in choosing the place of her service, because she did her service hours at the local library and didn't feel it was valuable, "I was stamping books where I didn't really feel like I was helping much" (Anna, S.P.). Amala said that apart from the required hours, there was no other encouragement to do service, "There were mandatory hours you had to complete, but outside of that, I think the student had to seek it" (Amala, S.P.). For Josephine, the Christian service "was a little fragmented" and she just "did the hours" and did not do anything further (Josephine, S.P.). And for Jane the Christian service could have been "more broad" and could have included topics such as the "environment" (Jane, S.P.).

Definitions of service: "What counts?" Service experience by young adult alumnae in their current lives was defined differently by several students. In their response to two open

ended survey questions that asked the young adult alumnae to provide additional information about the quality of their high school Christian service program and their service experience, one alumna reported, "I spend all of my extra time helping out my family and friends, visiting my grandparents, writing letters to my family abroad. So, I'm not sure if that counts as 'service'?" (Survey, text response). She continued to say that what she did for her family and relatives in her free time could be considered as service. In her words, "I helped my grandmother give food at the church, which was nice, but I did not feel a strong push to venture out much more, [because] there has always been such a need in my immediate surroundings" (Survey, text response).

Among the interview participants, two young adult alumnae confused service with their job related activities. Josephine said that she does a lot of service through the school, because she works there as a teacher. In her words, "I obviously support all the things that the school does, and help out students with the things they are doing (Josephine, S.P.). Another interview participant Rose also expressed a similar view, "Well I'm a Catholic school teacher, so it's a lot in there. I do a lot of the extracurricular activities... There is service in and outside of my classroom duties... I guess this [her job] is my Christian service [laughs out loud]" (Rose, S.P.). Yet another interviewee, Fatima, recalled, "My service at work in my school is related to... teaching and helping students to engage with different organizations..." (Fatima, S.P.), suggesting that service was something she did as part of her teaching job in school. One more interview participant, Christine, believed that giving time to a needed friend is service, "Some people don't think that...giving time to a friend is serving, but it is if you are going to help change her life in a positive way, that's serving!" (Christine, S.P.). And lastly, in the interviews with the young adult alumnae, when the researcher asked about their involvement with service, several of

them, in turn asked the researcher about “what counted” as service. This notion about “counting” service will be addressed further in Chapter 5.

Required service hours. One of the young adult alumnae's critiques about the high school service program was about the required service hours. Christian service at St. Mary's high school was mandatory for students as part of their religion department grades during the years 1998 to 2005. Some young adult alumnae were glad that they had certain required service hours, where as others felt that it was not helpful. For example, for an open ended survey questions, one respondent reported that she did "appreciate the service requirement" (Survey, text response) as it gave her a reason to begin volunteering in her community, and to serve the disadvantaged populations, which she may not have done otherwise, and which "had a profound impact" (Survey, text response) on her life. Another young adult alumna reported that she "took the Christian service program very seriously and went above and beyond the mandated hours" (Survey, text response), suggesting that she really valued the act of service rather than fulfilling the required hours. Yet another alumna responded that she "enjoyed" her service experience and was "glad" that she was required to do service hours suggesting that it has helped her develop an attitude of service (Survey, text response). However, though some young adult alumnae reported that they were glad that St. Mary's high school had a certain number of required Christian service hours, others reported that they had a different experience. One alumna critiqued that students at St. Mary's high school were "simply given hours to complete" at a place of their choosing without further guidance for a reflective and "meaningful experience" (Survey, text response). A similar perspective was shared by eight alumnae who reported that they did Christian service just to "fulfill the required service hours" (Survey, text response). Another alumna reported that there

was no proper monitoring to encourage students to actually fulfill their required service hours by doing service, instead students found ways to show proof of having completed their service hours without actually fulfilling them. One alumna expressed this view stating, "To be frank, most students I know completely made up the hours and had willing adults sign off on them" (Survey, text response). In relation to this experience, another alumna reported, "From what I remember, we just had to have a paper signed that confirmed we did our hours" (Survey, text response). Further, one alumna reported that she did not believe that her high school offered enough service opportunities for students to participate in service together as a community, rather students were expected to find their own opportunities to complete their service hours (Survey, text response). However, this was contradicted by another alumna who reported that she did most of her service while participating in Kiwanis Club "which allowed plenty of opportunities for group service all over the local and nearby communities" (Survey, text response), suggesting that the Christian service program did offer her opportunities to do service in groups, and she claimed that "it was more rewarding and motivating"(Survey, text response) for her to continue doing service. Another alumna reported that she actually "liked how the program did not force [her] to choose from a predestined list of activities, but rather encouraged [her] to seek out activities that legitimately interested [her]" (Survey, text response), suggesting that she preferred to choose her own service activities rather than being forced to choose from a list of given service opportunities.

Of the interview participants, Christine felt that required hours were beneficial, but that more consistent required hours would be helpful, "Unfortunately I only did what was required, I wish I had been more involved... It would've been different if I did certain required services

consistently..., I think we could've done more." (Christine, S.P.). Jennifer felt, "If I hadn't been required to do the community service, and if I wasn't involved in the clubs, I don't know that I would have started service" (Jennifer, S.P.). Jane also felt that the required hours are needed, however it is when students do extra hours that is more fulfilling, "I think all those extra hours that I did aside from the requirements were so much more fulfilling than the ones that...you have to do" (Jane, S.P.).

Lack of guided reflection. Young adult alumnae had participated in many service opportunities in their high school, but the guided reflection about their service experience for some was lacking. For example, the young adult alumnae responses to two open ended survey questions revealed one alumna reporting that she wasn't "told to reflect upon the impact or influence the [service] experience had on her" (Survey, text response). Another alumna reported that she "was mostly just going through the motions to get the assignment done" (Survey, text response), without any guided opportunity for further reflection on the service she did. Further, one more respondent reported that "there was a requirement and a form to fill out to prove that [she] did it [service], but there was no education around it" (Survey, text response). This perception was supported by another alumna who said, "Although there was significant value and lessons learned from the Christian Service Program, I think it would have been a stronger learning experience had there been more follow-up discussion about service projects rather than just turning in completed hour sheets" (Survey, text response). This suggests that the Christian service program at St. Mary's Catholic high school had limited or no opportunity for guided reflections about the service students did, and thus it may have limited the opportunities for students learning lessons and values, and providing them with a meaningful service experience.

Several of the interview participants also expressed that there should have been more of guided reflection on their service experiences. For example, Josephine expressed that "there should have been more of a discussion...The reflection part was missing" (Josephine, S.P.). Jane said, "I think even more discussion groups, or opportunities to really talk about the impact of service was needed (Jane, S.P.), and Rose said, "Some type of reflection on the experiences was needed" (Rose, S.P.).

Direct service opportunities. Some young adult alumnae were critical of the lack of direct service opportunities in their Christian service program. One alumna reported that she always remembered about a field trip she had as part of her morality class with Fr. James, who took the whole class to pass out clothes to the homeless in an inner city where many homeless lived under the bridge. Describing her experience of donating a belt to a homeless, she reported, "I will never forget the feeling I felt. I realized that something as simple as a belt can mean the world to someone" (Survey, text response). This profound service experience with the homeless made her realize "the power of giving" (Survey, text response). However, some other young adult alumnae had different views on their direct service experiences. For example, one alumna reported that she "did some very meaningful projects with the poor, but there were many opportunities to do "easy" projects that did not provide growth opportunities" (Survey, text response). She critiqued that those projects "helped almost no one - including the server" (Survey, text response), suggesting that there were some Christian service activities that did not promote growth opportunities for students at St. Mary's high school. Further, another alumna reported that "all of the service experiences she had in high school were from a distance" (Survey, text response). For example she brought in canned foods and donated for the poor, but

she "never interacted with the people she served" (Survey, text response). She went on to compare this experience with her college service experience stating how she had "learned about the idea of praxis, and combining service with action" (Survey, text response). She said that this idea of service with action is the foundation on which her "current experiences and beliefs about service are based on" (Survey, text response), suggesting that the indirect service activities she experienced in high school were not influential, or not as influential as those direct service activities she experienced in college.

Conclusion

The above mentioned survey and interview data have revealed that young adult alumnae from St. Mary's Catholic female single sex high school had perceived that their high school Christian service program experience had influenced their beliefs about the importance of service as well as influenced their current engagement with various service activities. Although alumnae's perceptions about the impact of Christian service program on their beliefs about the importance of service seem to be stronger than their current service engagement, these differences seem to decrease when they talked about their beliefs and engagement with four Catholic social teaching principles. In-fact, there is a discrepancy between alumnae's perceptions of Christian service program impacting their beliefs about service and their actual level of engagement in service. Analysis of the alumnae data will follow in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The conceptual framework of the Catholic theology of the human person and the Catholic social teaching principles have allowed the researcher in this study to explore in depth the perspectives of the Catholic high school young adult alumnae about their experience with their Catholic high school Christian service program, and its influence on their current values and beliefs about service, as well as their current engagement with various service activities. The research methodology and the conceptual framework have served as the basis for the major findings in this study. Further, there were some minor findings revealed in this study which are relevant to the Catholic high school Christian service education, and which can guide further research in service. The discussion in this chapter is presented in the following ways. First, the major and minor findings are discussed. Next, recommendations for the school, local parish, and diocese are discussed. Then, limitations in this study are acknowledged, and finally, recommendations for further research are suggested.

Major Findings

In answer to the research question 1(a), "What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current beliefs about service?" this research study found from both quantitative and qualitative data that the majority of the young adult alumnae respondents in this study from St. Mary's Catholic high school perceived that their high school Christian service program experience had absolutely influenced their current beliefs (66% from survey) and values (64%

from survey) about the importance of service. In addition, all interview participants (nine) also perceived that their beliefs were absolutely influenced by their high school Christian service program experience. Further, in answering the research question 1(b), "What are the perceptions of young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school about the influence of a Christian service program on their current engagement in service?" the qualitative interview data revealed that participants' perceptions were generally positive about the influence of Christian service program on their current engagement in service. This is understandable because the participants for the individual interview were chosen from a self-selected group of individuals (24 volunteers out of 131 survey participants), and as such it is logical to infer that those who were actively engaged in service and felt comfortable to talk about it, volunteered to take part in the individual interview. Thus, the selected interview participants (nine interviewees) provided a positive perspective about the influence of Christian service on their service engagement. Though valuable data, this necessarily lacks the generalizability to the entire population in this study. Although the qualitative data showed a positive influence on alumnae's engagement in service, the quantitative data, however, showed a different perspective. The quantitative data revealed that majority of the young adult alumnae participants in this study (58%) from St. Mary's high school perceived that their high school Christian service program not at all or weakly influenced them to engage in service activities in their current young adult life. And further, when research question 1(c), asked "What is the level of actual service engagement of young adult alumnae who participated in a Christian service program at a Catholic female single sex high school?" this study found from quantitative data that only about 24% of young adult alumnae participants in this study from St. Mary's high school were significantly engaged in

service in the past 12 months. Thus, despite the significant finding that young adult alumnae participants in this study feel philosophically influenced by their high school Christian service program, and when engaged in service activities are committed to the Catholic social teaching principles, the frequency of the actual engagement in service is weak. This raises the question, if young adult alumnae believe strongly about the importance of service in their lives, why aren't they engaged in service activities? This will be further analyzed in this chapter.

For the subsequent research question 2: "To what extent did young adult alumnae from a Catholic female single sex high school believe that their high school Christian service program experience shaped their beliefs about and current engagement with Catholic Social Teaching principles?" this research study found from the qualitative data that all interview participants (nine) perceived that their high school Christian service program experience absolutely shaped their beliefs about the importance of four Catholic social teaching principles. In addition, the quantitative data revealed that on average almost 3/4th of the respondents (74%) felt that St. Mary's high school Christian service program shaped their beliefs significantly to a great deal about the importance of four Catholic social teaching principles. Further, the qualitative data indicated that interview participants were engaged with the activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles and shared many examples of their service post high school. However, once again, it must be noted that participants for the individual interview were selected from a self-selected group of individuals who might have actively engaged in service and felt comfortable to take part in the individual interview. Thus, the positive influence of Christian service program on alumnae's current engagement with activities related four Catholic social teaching principles lacks the generalizability to the entire sample in this study. The quantitative

data also revealed that on average more than half of the participants (61%) perceived that St. Mary's high school Christian service program shaped their current engagement significantly to a great deal with activities related to above mentioned four Catholic social teaching principles. But, their actual level of engagement in service in the past 12 months contrasts with this strong result with only a minority (24%) indicating participation at the higher end of the scale. Thus there seems to be a discrepancy between alumnae's perception of their current engagement with service activities and the level of their actual engagement in service. This will be discussed further in the following section.

Discussion of Major Findings

The discussion on the major findings is presented in two ways. First, the Christian service program impact on alumnae's beliefs about service, and beliefs about four Catholic social teaching principles will be discussed, followed by the Christian service program impact on alumnae's engagement in service, and engagement with the four Catholic social teachings principles.

Christian service program impact on alumnae's beliefs. The findings from the quantitative data in this research have revealed that among the sample participants, the majority of young adult alumnae in this study (65%) perceive that their Catholic high school Christian service program positively impacts their beliefs and values about the importance of service. Further, on average, a clear majority of the alumnae participants in this study (74%) also felt that the Christian service program has shaped their beliefs about the importance of four Catholic social teaching principles significantly to a great deal. In addition, the qualitative interview data also corroborate with the quantitative findings. This suggests that participation in service in

general, and the understanding of Catholic social teaching principles in particular, has impacted their perception of the importance of all human persons, particularly the less fortunate ones, and the development of "other-centered" attitudes and behaviors. This was evidenced from the alumnae's statements in this study. For example, alumnae said that Christian service at St. Mary's high school was transformational and empowering as it built a foundation of understanding what it meant to give back to the community, and thus make a difference in their lives as well as in the lives of the less fortunate. Alumnae felt that Christian service reinforced in them an attitude of caring for others, humbled them to think outside of their own box, and get out of their shell to serve the less fortunate, and thus become selfless givers. They also stated that in Christian service they learned valuable lessons about humility and compassion, challenged their own stereotypical judgments about the poor and homeless, and was transformed from 'what can I get' type of attitude to 'what can I do' type of habit. This is consistent with Engebretson's (2009) findings from his case study in Catholic secondary schools where students who did service with the poor, homeless, and the less fortunate were challenged with their own complacency, and stereotypical judgments they had assimilated from their culture, and how their school service activities provided them with transformative experiences that led them to do selfless service.

Further, in addition to a majority of alumnae affirming their beliefs in the importance of four Catholic social teaching principles in quantitative data, alumnae in qualitative data also expressed statements affirming their beliefs in four Catholic social teaching principles. For example, alumnae said that Christian service taught them to believe in the infinite value of human life, because human life was created by God. They expressed attitudes consistent with the principle of respect for human life, indicating that every human person is valuable, important,

and deserves to be loved and respected despite of differences in socio-economic status, color, race, ethnicity, and other differences, because all are created equally by God. This is also consistent with the teachings of Catholic faith tradition which states "God created man in His image" (Gen. 1:27, *The New American Bible*, 1987, p. 9), and therefore every human person is "invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family" (NCCB, 1998, p.1).

Alumnae believed that empathizing with the suffering, feeding the poor, sheltering the homeless, and helping the less fortunate are all noble causes for which they are called to serve.

Additionally, alumnae felt that they should not support inhuman policies and practices, and were not afraid to voice against practices of human right violations in American society. All of these expressions suggest that alumnae perceived that their Catholic high school Christian service program taught them to value every human person, particularly those in need of service, and helped them free themselves from their self absorption, and develop an attitude of service.

Alumnae participants in this study also believed that other-centered attitudes and behaviors developed in service provided them with life fulfillment. For example, they said that service is life fulfilling, enriching, and spiritually uplifting, suggesting that they felt a sense of fulfillment in their life by doing service. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton, (2008) stated that the meaning of one's life for most Americans is to become one's own person, and much of this process is negative, because it involves breaking away from one's own "family, community, and inherited ideas" (p. 82). Although private life style may seem satisfying for some, or even for most people, it lacks much "intrinsic meaning" (Bellah et al., 2008, p. 83) in relation to fundamental questions such as the origin, existence, purpose, direction, and meaning of one's life. The alumnae from the Catholic single sex high school affirmed that their Christian

service program taught them that meaning and self-worth for their life comes in to existence through serving others like Christ in an effort to create "a just and loving society" (Bellah et al., 2008, p. 83). Catholic high school Christian service program has attempted to answer these questions for alumnae in this study from a Catholic biblical perspective, and has taught them that meaning and self-worth for their life comes in to existence through serving others like Christ in an effort to create "a just and loving society" (Bellah et al., 2008, p. 83). And this is also the mission of St. Marys' high school which attempts to educate its students become Christ-centered persons in order to "serve [their] dear neighbor" (SMHS, 2004a, p.23). This is also the mission of the Catholic Church in education which aims to form Christ-like men and women. And, service to the needy and less fortunate is an important way that gives expression to the Catholic vision and mission of education. The Catholic educational institutions serve as a vehicle to fulfill this mission. Therefore, this research reveals that Catholic high school Christian service programs can be successful in inculcating the ethic of service with its Christian service programs. However, more work needs to be done to move students from belief to action.

Christian service impact on alumnae's engagement in service. According to the qualitative data the interview participants are very engaged in service in their current life. Again, as mentioned above, this is understandable due to the fact that the interview participants were chosen from a self-selected group of individuals who might have actively engaged in service and felt comfortable to talk about it in the interview. This however, lacks generalizability to the entire participant pool in this study. This is clear from the quantitative data which indicated that a minority of young adult alumnae participants (42%) thought that their high school Christian service program influenced their current engagement in service activities. Further, although on

average, a majority of alumnae participants (61%) perceived that the Christian service program shaped their current engagement significantly to a great deal with activities related to four Catholic social teaching principles, in reality only less than 1/4th (24%) are in the higher end of the scale who had actually participated in service during the past 12 months. Thus I believe there is a disconnect between young adult alumnae's perception of Christian service program impacting their beliefs about the importance of service and their actual level of engagement in service. There could be a number of plausible reasons to explain this factor.

Plausible reasons for disconnect. One of the plausible reasons for the above mentioned disconnect could be that, in general, young adult alumnae participants choose to volunteer in activities related to the four Catholic social teaching principles because they understand that these activities are meaningful, purposeful, transformative, and life fulfilling. So, when they do participate in service, it is service that is linked to the Catholic social teaching principals, rather than volunteering at organizations which have no relation to these foundational Catholic beliefs. However, the frequency of their engagement in these activities may be due to the demands of young adult life, and the reasons they have stated in this study, namely, working, establishing family and career, and dealing with financial hardships.

Further, the age range of the population included in this study was primarily between 23 to 30 years. This is the age range of emerging young adulthood, during which period individuals usually tend to focus on forming intimate relationships with others (Erikson, 1985), concentrate on marriage, establishing a family, finding jobs, and building career, and thus they may not prioritize service, or may not be able to prioritize service in their young adult life, because although the young adult alumnae participants may have the desire to do service, the financial

hardships may force them to work more than one job, and thus prevent them finding the time to engage in service. This reason was supported by the interview participants in this study. These concerns are legitimate and need to be addressed. However, the consequence of these concerns is that the young adult alumnae in this research are not engaging in service. And, they are not alone. It is the culture of the current American society to be less involved with service, less involved with community, and more involved with self (Putnam, 2000). In current American society, leading a life of service is counter cultural to the way people think, believe, and behave. Individuals are focused on career building, success, material or financial gain (Astin, et al., 2002; Pryor et al., 2007), and indulge in an attitude of getting ahead of others. It is a culture that does not focus on "civic membership" (Bellah et al., 2008) but preoccupied with self-fulfilling, self-achieving, and self-gratifying individualism (Lasley, 1987). The social media, which the Millennial generation is attuned to, also perpetrates this kind of culture to be socially desirable. Success in school, business, and career is lauded, while failure in these arenas are discouraged. Naturally, the individuals tend to become attracted to this kind of enticing culture which is embedded in current American society, and consider leading a service-oriented life style as counter cultural to current trends in society. Therefore educators in Catholic high school should rethink their Christian service pedagogy in order to form their students to reverse the current social trend in American society, and help them lead a meaningful philosophy of life which would promote developing a service-oriented life style despite the obstacles that modern life may present.

In addition, the findings from this study revealed that young adult alumnae participants seemed to have engaged in service activities while they were in high school, in college, and as

long as they were connected with their local church community. These settings had provided them with support structures for service engagement. Structures such as service hours requirements, service opportunities, service facilities, collaborative engagement in service with other students, teachers, and community members, writing assignments on service engagements, and credit, or rewards for service, all of these may have helped participants to actively seek out service engagements. However, once they graduated from high school and college, and disengaged from the support of the local (church) community, they might not have been provided with the above mentioned support structures to engage in service activities in their young adult life. Although they may strongly believe in the importance of service, it may be difficult to seek out service engagements individually as young adults, because they don't have these support structures. Further, these support structures may have encouraged compliance rather than commitment in service (Sax, 2000). The “required” hours of St. Mary’s Christian service program were based on a reward/ punishment model that does encourage compliance, and not independent engagement. But, the service experience at high school should empower students to individually engage in service once they transition from those support structures. The goal of Christian service in Catholic high school is to enable its students to make a commitment in service rather than compliance. Therefore, it is important to re-evaluate the pedagogical method of Christian service program at Catholic high school in order to form students to engage in service not merely when they are within the above mentioned support structures, but more importantly guiding them toward making a life-long commitment to engage in service individually beyond those support structures as well.

One pedagogical method through which students at Catholic high school can be formed

towards engaging in service individually beyond the above mentioned support structures is the guided reflection on their service experience. Guided reflection on the experiences of Christian service can assist students to see its deeper meaning (di Giacomo, 2007). Reflection is critical for students to work through paradox and ambiguity, contradiction and complexity, and thus develop capacities for thoughtful decision making, and deliberate action, particularly in service it can provide better perspectives from which can flow empathy, critical thinking, and informed action for social justice (Johnson & O'Grady, 2006). Research has indicated that undergraduates who reflected on their service engagement increased their desire to serve their community, and created a deeper sense of personal responsibility to meet community needs, and a deeper level of commitment to community service (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997). A number of participants in this study have said that they were asked to turn in their completed service hour sheets, but were not asked to reflect on their service experiences. The lack of guided reflection on service experience may have limited their learning potential to prioritize service engagement in their lives once they moved beyond the support structures they received in high school. Therefore educators in high school should reconsider their pedagogical methods in Christian service and include appropriate guided reflection as an important pedagogical tool in order to guide students not only learn about the importance of service, but more importantly enabling them to prioritize service engagement in their young adult life as well. Although the reflective piece seems to have not been emphasized for the population in this study when they were in high school, currently St. Mary's high school has included the reflective piece such as group discussion, group presentation, and written assignment in its Christian service program. Further, the school has provided students with a resource manual titled, "*Making the hours count: Transforming your service experience*"

by Fourré (2006) which outlines how students could make their service experience as a transformative one for them. These are important pedagogical tools St. Mary's has adopted in recent years in order to guide its students to effectively learn lessons and values from their service experience, and thus possibly help them prioritize service engagement in their entire life. It is important for educators and students to continue this practice.

Alternative interpretation about major findings. Considering St. Mary's Catholic high school is a college preparatory school, as well as a national blue ribbon school of excellence, students at this school are prepared to succeed in academic excellence in order that they may enter in to competitive higher education institutions, and upon graduating from those institutions, they may take up professional career jobs which may demand more working hours than the usual eight hours a day. And, the job may demand working on weekends as well, besides balancing their personal and family obligations. These are realities of life for individuals in current American society. Therefore one may look at the quantitative data in this study, particularly the data relating to alumnae's beliefs about Christian service program influencing their current engagement in service in general, and their actual level of engagement in service in the past 12 months in particular, and may interpret the responses of "somewhat" (42.30%) and "1-5 times/year" (31.75%) respectively as a positive response arguing that in spite of alumnae's very busy life, they were able to do at least some service which is better than those who did not do service at all. Accordingly, the total alumnae participants in this study who thought that their Catholic high school Christian service program influenced their current engagement in service would rise to a majority (85%), and those who participated in service in the past 12 months from 1-5 times/year to 16 times and above will also rise to a majority (67%). This interpretation might

lessen the disconnect between Christian service impacting alumnae's strong beliefs about the importance of service and their actual level of current engagement in service. However, this interpretation does not provide the solid data needed to suggest that alumnae participants who were influenced are significantly engaged, considering the high levels (33%) of alumnae who did not participate at all, and the low percentage (24%) of alumnae significantly engaged in past 12 months. Further, it does not take in to consideration the type of service that participants linked to frequency.

Minor Findings

Meaningful philosophy of life. The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) study by Astin et al., (2002), Pryor et al., (2007), and Pryor et al. (2009) found that there is a declining trend in developing a meaningful philosophy of life over financial gain among college freshmen in the past 35 to 40 years. However, the conceptual framework and the Catholic faith tradition in this study offered a possible response to address this trend through Christian service program in Catholic high school. Consistent with that perspective, some alumnae in this study said that their high school Christian service experience made them seek out a meaningful work environment, suggesting that they wanted to work in an environment which help them lead a more purposeful and meaningful life over financial gains. For example one alumna said that initially she was working at an entertainment industry, but did not find her life fulfilling. Therefore she made a career change and worked in a non-profit organization which undertook many charity works and she also started her own charity organization. Other alumnae also engaged in service activities that they believed enhanced their quality of life. It is possible that the service experience alumnae

had at their high school had provided them with the foundational values and beliefs which enabled them to consciously seek out service opportunities in order to leading a meaningful life.

Omission of right to life issues. Though this research focused on beliefs about and participation in service, some of the issues around service, and opportunities for service were linked to Catholic Social Teachings about respect for life. However, none of the participants talked about the most commonly discussed issues related to life and death, such as euthanasia, and abortion. These are significant issues to the Catholic social teachings related to respect for life. For example, none of the service activities in the document review revealed student activities related to voicing out, or, acting against these issues. Further, although no survey question explicitly asked about these issues, the text responses to open ended survey questions also did not reveal any mention of service activities related to these topics. It is unclear if the Christian service did not focus on activities related to these life issues, or, students did not show interest to engage in activities related to these issues. However, the interview participants also did not attempt to speak about these life issues, though the researcher did not explicitly ask about them. Further, it may also be possible that the researcher's positionality as a Catholic priest precluded the interviewees from talking about these issues with the intent to avoid embarrassment for expressing differing views with a priest.

What counts as service? In this research, when asked about the involvement of alumnae in service, several interview participants in turn asked the researcher "what counted" as service. Further, some alumnae tended to consider helping family, or fulfilling job related responsibilities as service. This was evidenced from alumnae's expressions of helping family or doing job related activities. For example, one alumna said that she helped her grandma, and she hoped that it

counted as service. Another alumna said that she spent all of her extra time helping her family and friends, visiting grandparents, writing letters to her family abroad, and wasn't sure if those activities counted as service. Yet, another alumna confused her job related activities with service saying that she did activities in and out of her classroom duties, and considered them as her Christian service. All of these expressions suggest that alumnae lacked a clear understanding of service, and held on to the concept of what "counts" as service. This notion of "counting service" might have been unintentionally infused in students' minds through the current structure of the Christian service program in high school which "required" hours and accountability for service. And, alumnae have not grown out of this notion, and continue to carry it on in their young adult life causing misconception about service, and thus possibly limiting their aspirations to actually engage in service. Therefore, it is important to form students at high school to grow out of this notion of "counting service," and educate them with clear perspectives about service. Christian service pedagogy must concentrate to link *what* students learn with *how* they learn service. Attention must be paid to *how* students learn service in high school in an attempt to provide opportunities to develop appropriate perspectives about service. Therefore, it is important to critically examine the existing structure of Christian service pedagogy in high school, and be attentive to instilling in students appropriate perception about service, as well as attentive to the kind of perception students develop about service as they engage in service activities, which will have an impact on their service engagement in their adult life. This relates to the next section which deals with the required nature of service.

Required nature of service. In this research, the document review, the survey text responses, and the interview participants' responses have revealed that service was a requirement

of the religion department curriculum. That is, students had to complete service hours as part of their grade. Although some alumnae reflected back on the required nature of service in high school was beneficial for their service engagement in their adult life, many alumnae said that they did service simply to fulfill the required service hours. This might suggest that the required service hours were external motivators, for obtaining grades and recognition, but it may have limited their internal drive for future service aspirations. This may be a partial explanation for the fact that a majority of the alumnae participants (58%) perceived that their high school service program experience did not or weakly influenced them to engage in service activities in their current young adult life, and that a smaller percentage (24%) actually did significant service in the past 12 months. It may be that a “required” high school Christian service program has limited impact on developing students' internal drives for service engagements. Service aspiration in adult life is internally driven (Mc Adams, Holly, & Shadd, 1998), although external gratification may serve as an initial attraction. Therefore, Catholic high schools must rethink the Christian service pedagogy so as to how it can design, or, redesign its Christian service program that would help students develop their internal drives rather than fulfilling their external gratification.

Communitarian aspect of service. The survey text responses as well as interview responses revealed that several alumnae believed that doing service with other students, teachers, and school staff had much more impact on their service aspirations than doing service as individuals. The communitarian aspect of service provides opportunities for learning or affirming common beliefs and values about service. It also creates possibilities for establishing a net work of reciprocal caring relationships with others which may strengthen one’s social capital (Smith, 2003; Coleman, 1998; Putnam, 2000), which may help overcome the destructive individualistic

attitudes and behaviors that do not help people live a healthy, happy, caring, and harmonious life style in society. This relates to Putnam's (2000) findings that American society is experiencing a decline in community spirit and an increase in an individualistic life style. As a result people increasingly live in isolation as unhappy individuals, and contribute to the "growing culture of violence" (NCCB, 2007, sec. 85, p. 25). A commitment to the pursuit of human compassion, and social justice is essential to society's well being (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). In this study, the positive beliefs and experiences of alumnae from doing service as a class, or school community, and its impact on their service aspiration suggest that the communitarian aspect of service could possibly work to counter to individualistic attitudes and behaviors, and thus create possibilities for strengthening the community spirit of individuals in society which Putnam (2000) talks about, and thus may begin to break the rising tide of individualism (Rochester, Paine, & Howlett, 2010). Therefore, Christian service pedagogy in Catholic high school should continue to provide opportunities for students in groups and encourage them to engage in service as a community.

Importance of direct service. The document review, survey, and interview responses revealed that students at St. Mary's high school most often participated in service that was not directly involved with those that were to be served. They engaged in fund raisers, donated money, cloths, toys, and books, took part in charity walks, and assisted at the Mass in church. And, although these activities are considered part of service, and are important and necessary, they are not sufficient to provide an interactive transformative service experience. These activities are passive in nature, impersonal, and do not provide a real hands on experience of actually doing service for others. The direct service interaction is essential for a possible life transformation for both the server and the served (Engebretson, 2009). Service activities such as

feeding the poor, visiting the homeless, serving the sick in hospitals or convalescent homes, tutoring the disadvantaged children, and helping single mothers are all activities which can provide a personal interaction with those served, and possibly offer life changing experiences for both the server and the served. In this research, several interview participants expressed life changing experiences as a result of their direct service in various of the above activities. None of the alumnae expressed a life changing experience as a result of donating, or taking part in charity walk, or serving at worship related activities. Therefore, although service activities such as donations or assistance at worship services may serve as opportunities for planting the seed of service in students, Catholic high school Christian service program should prioritize providing direct service opportunities for students in an attempt to educate them with life changing service experiences which may possibly sustain their service aspiration in their adult life.

Service as false generosity. The true spirit of service is "other-centered" and not "self centered." In this research, several alumnae said that they "felt good about donating food and clothes, feeding the poor, helping the homeless, and visiting the senior citizens." Only very few thought about improving the conditions of the less fortunate. In service, if the focus is on one's feelings about the service one does, it is self gratification, or self-fulfillment which nourishes a false charity (Freire, 2009). As long as the positive feelings persist, one would possibly engage in service. Or, one may aspire to do service for the sake of indulging in those positive feelings. The moment those self-fulfilling positive feelings diminish, one would possibly disengage from service. Further, this kind of attitude may lead to what Gerics (1991) calls *noblesse oblige* - the privileged serving the less privileged notion of service. This relates to Freire's (2009) view of "false generosity" (p. 44) in the context of the oppressor and oppressed, where the oppressor

desires to keep the oppressed in their status quo in order to continue expressing his/her (false) generosity. While it would be wrong to say that any of the participants “desired to keep the oppressed in their status quo,” it does appear that some alumnae may have done service to feel good about themselves rather than focusing on improving the unfortunate conditions of those served. But, Christian service is a call to serve others irrespective of one's feelings. It is a selfless giving of one's time and energy. Often times the unfortunate conditions of the poor, homeless, and the less fortunate may demand one's time and energy, and may challenge one's comfortable life. They may not always provide the server with positive feelings, yet the server is called to serve them, keeping in mind their much needed well-being. Here service is "other centered" rather than "self-centered." Although the server is not alien to the temptation of human feelings, the focus in service should be how one can make better the lives of the poor, homeless, and less fortunate, irrespective of one's feelings. This “other centered” nature of service formation what will sustain students for their future service engagement. Therefore a Catholic high school Christian service program should frame, or, reframe its service pedagogy in such ways that it would form its students in an attempt to transform them from self-fulfilling, service aspiring individuals toward the other-centered, selfless service engagement heroes.

Spiritual enrichment and service. One of the foundational beliefs about service in a Christian service program is based on Jesus' teaching, "Whatever you did for one of the least brothers [and sisters] of mine, you did for me" (Mt. 25: 40, *The New American Bible*, 1987). Consistent with this belief, most alumnae in this study connected their service engagement with their Catholic faith, and expressed spiritual nourishment in serving others. For example, alumnae said that serving others is a way to serve God and indicated that they felt more spiritually

nourished when served. While the server realizes a spiritual vocation to serve the less fortunate, the served realizes that she is not abandoned. Both are led to a deeper spiritual enrichment. Importantly, this spiritual enrichment continually strengthens the beliefs and convictions of the server about service, and enables her or him to engage in service. This is consistent with Putnam and Campbell (2010) findings which state that "religiously observant Americans are more generous with time and treasure than demographically similar secular Americans" (p. 453), and "religiosity is, by far, the strongest and most consistent predictor of a wide range of measures of civic involvement" (p. 454). Further, the same study found that religiously observant Americans are more likely to express "empathy and altruistic values" (p. 464), and "less likely to espouse selfish values" (p. 465). However, the spiritual enrichment, resulting from Christian faith based service, may become a challenge to the American population in recent times due to a decline in identification with a religious faith and spiritual enrichment. According to a report on the American Religious Identification Survey 2008 by Kosmin, Keysar, Cragun and Navarro-Rivera, (2009), the American population continues to show signs of becoming less religious, with one out of every five Americans failing to indicate a religious identity in 2008. Therefore, as individuals tend to become more and more secular in today's American society, one way to form students in high school for their spiritual enrichment is through Christian service, because many alumnae in this study have said that Catholic faith based Christian service experience has helped them deepen the spiritual aspect of their life. Although it is not clear if alumnae related their "spiritual enrichment" with their personal spirituality, and/or, adherence to religious rituals and doctrines, the fact is that Christian service experience provided them with spiritual life satisfaction, and thus shaped their perspectives about service as important in their life. For those

who do not participate in a faith life, Christian service can draw them to explore the spiritual enrichment resulting from doing service, and thus perhaps draw them to a faith life as well. Therefore, educators in Christian service pedagogy should pay attention to framing, or reframing Christian service activities with an emphasis on religious faith based principles and practices, such as Catholic social teaching principles, in an attempt to provide students with spiritual enrichment which may sustain their service engagement not only when they are in high school, but in their adult life as well.

Service identity development. Youniss et al., (1999) stated that service contributes to a positive identity development during an opportune development period, a period where the internal and external conditions help students to learn and develop social justice consciousness. For the young adult alumnae in this study, their high school setting provided these conditions to develop a positive service identity. A majority of alumnae expressed that their high school Christian service program was well organized, provided them with various service opportunities including donations, various drives, fund raisers, feeding the poor and homeless, service to senior citizens, shelter homes, orphanages, and hospitals, and beach clean ups. These external conditions guided them towards developing their internal conditions including finding meaning and purpose in service, being transformed, spiritually enriched, and empowered to do service. As a result many alumnae expressed that they felt good and life-fulfilling by serving others, and had the yearning to do service even after high school, and moved on to college, and young adult life. Thus they have developed a “service identity” (Marta & Pozzi, 2008, p.38) for themselves based on the conviction that serving others is a noble cause and a model for good citizenship.

Further, research has shown that volunteerism empowers and supports students’ pro-

social role identity construction (Callero et al., 1987; Grube & Piliavin, 2000; Piliavin & Callero, 1991). As students engage in Christian service activities, they tend to develop a strong service identity as explained above. As this identity continues to develop and grow, individuals strengthen their commitment to engage in pro-social actions (Piliavin, Grube, & Callero, 2002) which promote a social justice consciousness. Several alumnae in this research have expressed that their service experience has helped them to get out of their shell and experience another aspect of life. It has helped them free themselves from self absorption and become conscious of the needs of others and thus engage in pro-social activities.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Local school level. The following recommendations are suggested for the local schools for their service pedagogy.

Provide structured service practice. It is recommended that Catholic high schools have more of a structured service practice. Some alumnae in this study have expressed that they were at a loss in finding service opportunities because Christian service program was disorganized at St. Mary's. Providing students with a well coordinated, and easy access to service opportunities is critical for student encouragement in service. Therefore educators in Christian service should offer a well coordinated and an easy access to service opportunities for students.

Provide meaningful service opportunities. Service opportunities should be appropriate and meaningful in order that they may have maximum, positive, and transformative impact on students. For example, a number of alumnae in this study complained that they were asked to do the required service hours at St. Mary's, but were not guided in choosing meaningful service opportunities during high school, and in some instances students wasted their time and energy in

doing services such as "stamping books at a library" and found it was not helpful. They ended up doing this kind of activity due to lack of guidance in choosing appropriate service opportunities at St. Mary's. Therefore Christian service pedagogy should provide timely guidance for students in choosing appropriate service opportunities.

Provide direct service opportunities. Catholic high schools provide opportunities for both direct and indirect service. The direct service opportunities provide hands on experience of serving, interacting, and relating with those served. The indirect service provides opportunities for donating money, food, clothes, toys, books, blood and other items. Several alumnae expressed that they had a life-changing experience from the direct service than indirect service opportunities at St. Mary's. Although both practices are important and helpful, life-transforming service experiences will have a better impact on students for their future service aspirations than service without those experiences. Therefore, educators at Catholic high school should make sure to provide students with more opportunities for direct service engagements.

Provide guided reflection in service. Several alumnae said that they completed the required service hours but were not guided to reflect upon their service experience, and felt that this limited the impact of the experience at St. Mary's. Guided reflection on service experience is critical for learning life-transforming lessons. Reflection helps students develop capacities for thoughtful decision making and deliberate action (Johnson & O'Grady, 2006), and it can effect life-changing awareness from which can flow empathy, critical thinking, and informed action for social justice (Johnson & O'Grady, 2006). Therefore it is recommended that Catholic high school Christian service program include a guided reflective service practice such as structured self

reflection, and/or, group discussion, and/or, group presentation oriented service practice in order to help students reflect on their service experience.

Provide Catholic value laden service opportunities. Values and beliefs are foundational for student service engagement. They give meaning to their service activities. Strong convictions in values and beliefs will enable and sustain their engagement in service. Therefore Christian service pedagogy must be predicated on a clear Catholic social teaching value laden service practice that will help students to learn the espoused Catholic values and beliefs about service, and enable them to make a strong commitment to engage in service activities. Educators in Christian service pedagogy should frame their service opportunities by including specific Catholic social teaching principles which would guide students to learn, reflect, and relate their service experiences with those principles. In recent years St. Mary's high school seems to have incorporated this practice which should be evaluated on an ongoing basis, and strengthened further.

Initiate on-going evaluation. The impact of a Catholic high school Christian service program on alumnae's later years of life could be comprehensively understood by seeking critical inputs from alumnae on an on-going basis. Alumnae's critical perspectives will provide comprehensive data about Christian service, which may inform educators at Catholic high school to continually work on finding innovative ways to strengthen their Christian service program. Therefore, educators in Christian service pedagogy should attempt to seek critical inputs from alumnae on an ongoing basis through survey, or, interview, or, through an annual alumnae gathering.

Parish community. Many Catholic high school students are connected with their local parish community. The local parish community provides opportunities for students for service engagement. This was evidenced from the fact that the highest number of service activities alumnae did in the past 12 months were church related service engagements such as teaching faith formation class, volunteering as ushers, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, prolife activists, feeding the poor, and taking part in various drives. Although all of these are considered as service, and lessons could be learned from them, the service activities such as feeding the poor, helping the homeless, or aiding the sick, may provide life-changing experiences. For example, one alumna at St. Mary's was so emotional when she donated to a homeless man, she talked about it the whole year how much it meant for her. This is the kind of experience service engagement at a local parish should provide for students.

The local parish usually has the resources, and can provide access to service facilities through its various parish based outreach ministries. The local parish can live out its vision and mission by helping its students become Christ-like persons by providing service opportunities. Therefore it is important that Catholic high schools collaborate with the local parish, and create collaborative service opportunities for its students. And, the local parish in turn should partner with the local school in order to provide students and alumnae with value laden direct service opportunities, so that they are guided towards transformative service engagements.

Provide opportunities for spiritual enrichment. In this study, most alumnae related their service experience with their Catholic faith based values and beliefs, and found service experience at St. Mary's was spiritually enriching to their life. In a world where American population in recent times showed signs of decline in identification with a religious faith

(Kosmin et al., 2009), and spiritual vitality (Roozen, 2011) the local parish has the resources and the capacity to provide students and alums with opportunities to strengthen their spiritual enrichment from doing service. Parish based service opportunities can also serve as a tool to draw the students and alums towards the faith life of the parish community which supports their spiritual enrichment through service. Therefore it is important for the local parish to partner with the local school in order to create opportunities for students and alums for their transformative and spiritually enriching service engagements.

Diocese level. Catholic high schools are under the umbrella of a local diocese or archdiocese either directly or indirectly. As such, it enacts guidelines, policies, and practices for directing Catholic high schools under its care. Therefore, the local diocese should make concentrated efforts to systematically study and understand the nature of service practices which are currently in effect in its schools, and come up with appropriate guidelines and policies for effective service practice. The diocese should provide clear Catholic social teaching value laden guidelines and policies on service in order to help its high schools design or redesign their Christian service program. It must revisit and strengthen its guidelines and policies in order to affirm its emphasis and support for an effective Christian service program practice. Moreover, it must make sure to provide a balanced support system which includes financial, personnel, and transportation in relationship to service opportunities in order to help create innovative service engagement for students. Further, the diocese could be a place of dialogue and information sharing for schools to obtain service opportunities. It could also serve as a clearing house by creating a coordinated service opportunity program which would reduce the burden on its schools from finding safe and appropriate service opportunities for its students. Finally, it must

make sure to evaluate the Christian service program at the diocesan level on an ongoing basis, and provide recommendations for further improvement of the Christian service programs in its schools.

Limitations

Instrument. Although the survey questions yielded significant results and there was no complaints from the survey participants about the clarity of the questions, the researcher felt, during the data analysis, that certain questions should have been more clearly stated to provide better accuracy for the participants' understanding. For example, the description of what was meant by the survey scales "somewhat" "significant" "very significant" and "a great deal," lacked proper precision. This would have provided much clarity for data interpretation, particularly the midpoint scale of "significant" which posed ambiguity in interpreting the data. Perhaps a different set of responses could have been used in order to avoid this limitation in this study. Further, the response scale for the question "How often have you participated in service during the past 12 months?" also lacked appropriate clarity. In addition, the frequency of service engagement response selection did not provide adequate clarity to the kind of experience alumnae had in service. For example, assisting at a Mass for 10 times is different from feeding the poor 2 times, or helping the homeless 5 times. Therefore the current frequency response scale for this question does not provide what kind of service experience alumnae participated in for their service engagement in the previous year, nor does it provide how important a particular service experience was in relationship to others. Therefore this question would also have been more clear with different response possibilities.

In addition, some questions in the survey could have been redesigned to include fuller and clearer examples. Question such as "To what extent do you feel your Catholic high school Christian service program has shaped your beliefs about the importance of respecting the life of all human persons (e.g. race, color, and ethnicity)" may have caused participants confusion. The examples given in this question seemed to misguide some participants to think that respecting the life of all would mean respecting people from different races, colors, and ethnicities. If the examples included the poor, homeless, abandoned, prisoners, and those of lower economic status, this would have given a broader perspective to respecting the life all individuals. Further, a clarifying question about why alumnae did not participate in service for the past 12 months would have also been beneficial to this study.

Participant selection. An additional limitation relates to the manner in which the interview participants were selected. Because the participants self-selected to engage in the interview process, they cannot be considered a random or unbiased participant pool. Creating a more randomized selection process for interview would be beneficial.

Population. The graduated classes of 1998 to 2005, whose age ranged primarily from 23-30 years for this study is a limitation. As Erikson (1985) has pointed out that it is the age range of emerging young adulthood. Young adults in this period usually tend to focus on forming intimate relationships with others, marriage, establishing a family, finding jobs, and building career, and thus they may not prioritize service in their young adult life. To find out the true impact of Catholic high school Christian service in graduates' later years of life, it may be fruitful to either increase the age range, or, choose the age range between 30-40 during which period

most individuals may have already settled in life with jobs, marriage and family, and thus may be able to prioritize service in their mid adult life.

In addition, it must be noted that 92% of the participants in this study reported attending Catholic elementary schools. The participants who reported that they are engaged in service in their current young adult life may also be predisposed to complete service due to their previous Catholic elementary school experience, and thus not entirely impacted by their Catholic high school service experience.

Further, it also must be acknowledged that 95% of the participants reported that they were raised as Catholics. The Catholic values and lessons learned from one's family environment may have added influence on alumnae's beliefs and values about the importance of service and their aspirations to engage in service activities.

The total alumnae who graduated from St. Mary's were 1170 between the years 1998-2005, out of which only 131 valid responses to the survey were included in the data analysis, which is only about 11.16% of the total graduates. This small percentage of population does not reflect the perspectives of the entire graduates and thus limits the generalizability of this study..

Finally, this research chose an all female single sex Catholic high school setting for its study. Although the quantitative and qualitative research methods utilized in this research attempted to provide validity for its findings, a gap in gender differentiated views does exist. The perspective of male young adult alumni is needed to compare and complement the results from this study.

Further Research

The current study has revealed that the Catholic high school Christian service program

experience does impact the beliefs and values of alumnae about the importance of service. However, their actual level of service engagement in current life is less pronounced. Research is needed to study the factors that would possibly increase the level of alumnae's engagement in service in their young adult life.

In Catholic high school, the service component alone does not influence students' aspiration for service. It also includes the academic and religious worship activities. The current research has studied only the impact of Christian service program on young adult alumnae's beliefs and engagement in service. Further study is needed to explore the impact of academic and religious components in order to have a comprehensive understanding of alumnae's beliefs, values, and service aspirations.

The population in this study were young adult alumnae between 23 to 30 years, the majority of whom perceived that their high school Christian service program has influenced their current beliefs and values about the importance of service, but identified that some are not actively engaged in service in current life. Research is needed to compare and complement the perspectives of differing age groups including adult life (30-40 years), mid adult life (40-50 years), and late adult life (50 years and above) in order to comprehensively understand the impact of Christian service program on alumnae, as well as to inform Christian service program practice.

Among the participants, 92% reported that they attended Catholic elementary schools, and thus may be predisposed to service experiences earlier than in Catholic high school. Therefore, a comparative study between those who completed Catholic elementary school and

those who did not may provide accurate data to understand the impact of Catholic high school service experience in young adult alumnae's life.

Since this study focused only on all female single sex Catholic high school alumnae, research with an all male single sex Catholic high school alumni is also needed for a broader understanding of the impact of Catholic high school service pedagogy.

Moreover, a comparative study with female, male, and co-educational Catholic high school settings may further contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Catholic high school Christian service program on its alumni/alumnae.

The alumnae's social and economic status may be a contributing factor for their engagement, or disengagement in service in their young adult life. For example a financially well-off alumna may find it easy to allocate time to engage in service than one who is financially challenged, and who may take more than one job to meet her financial obligations, and thus may find it difficult to allocate time to do service. Therefore, it will be helpful to clarify this assumption by researching the impact of Christian service on alumnae by involving their social and economic status.

Finally, this study could be fine tuned with more clarity on the Likert scale responses as well as the response scale to the frequency of actual engagement in the past 12 months. In addition, the study would benefit from repetition with the same population after 10 years when the current population will be advanced to the mid adult life stages of 30 to 40 years in order to find out if they would then be actively engaged in service.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that a Christian service program in a Catholic high school has positively impacted young adult alumnae in learning and developing values and beliefs about the importance of service. Catholic social teachings have served as the guiding principles for alumnae participants to engage in service activities in high school. The service experiences, particularly the direct service experiences, provided life transformative lessons that helped alumnae counter individualism and selfishness, and develop an attitude of community spirit. Since individuals in society are increasingly concerned more about self-interests, and less about others' well being, Christian service program offers ways to reverse this trend. Educators are invited to embrace innovative ways to utilize Christian service program in order to make it more meaningful and rewarding for students.

Although alumnae participants strongly believed in the importance of service, their engagement in service in current life was lower than expected. Therefore educators are invited to examine their current Christian service pedagogy, and address those factors that contribute to alumnae's low level of service engagement, and utilize creative and innovative ways to raise the level of service engagement in their adult life.

The researcher was guided by the conceptual framework derived from Catholic theology of the human person and Catholic social teaching principles in this study. The researcher's education in Catholic institutions and his life as a priest within the Catholic Church has exposed him to Christian service time and again, taught him the importance of every human person, and guided him to believe that Catholic high schools can nurture service aspirations in students which can impact their future engagement as well. The data from this research study partially

corroborate his life experience. Although engagement in service during young adult life seems to be weaker than the researcher had expected, belief in the importance of service is significantly strong, which could be guided towards translating it in to action. The researcher was surprised to see that more alumnae were not significantly engaged in service during their young adult life, but he was glad to see that they felt their Catholic high school Christian service program taught them the value of every human person, provided them with transformative life experiences, empowerment, freedom from material things, spiritual enrichment, and helped them to become other-centered individuals. While Catholic high school can celebrate these strengths, it needs to do much formative work for students in order to help them translate their strong beliefs in to action. This study has provided one step closer to accomplishing that endeavor.

Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Catholic High School Young Adult Alumnae Perspective and Engagement in Social Justice.

I. Demographic Information

1. (a) I attended Catholic high school (9 - 12 grades) Yes No.
(b) If yes, for how many years? 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years.
2. I belong to the age range of 21-22, 23-24, 25-26, 27-28, 29-30, Other.
3. Ethnicity: White/Caucasian, Afro-American, Hispanic/Latino(a), Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, Multi-racial, Other_____.
4. I graduated from Catholic high school in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005
5. I attended Catholic elementary school. Yes No
6. (a) I attended college/university. Yes No.
(b) I attended a Catholic college/university. Yes No.
7. I was raised as a Catholic, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Other_____.
8. My current religious identification is: Practicing Catholic, Non-practicing Catholic, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Other_____.
9. I attend religious worship services, ceremonies or events:

Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always
10. My current employment status is: Full-time employed, Part-time employed, Unemployed, Student, Other_____.
11. My current occupation is _____.
12. If I were of high school age today I would choose to attend a Catholic high school.

Yes No. And the reason is _____.

II. Please think back to your **High School service experiences**. Your honest answers are appreciated and this survey is anonymous. Your opinions will help the researcher to strengthen current high school students' service experiences.

*For the following questions the researcher is interested in learning about **your experience with the Christian Service Program** from your high school.*

13. How often have you participated in service during the past 12 months? (e.g. volunteering, visiting the sick/elderly, giving donations, feeding the homeless, raising funds, etc...)

Not at all, 1-5 times /year, 6-10 times/year, 11-15 times/year,
16 times and above/year.

14. To what extent do you think your high school Christian service program influences your **current engagement** in service activities?

Not at all, Somewhat, Significant, Very Significant, A Great Deal.

15. To what extent do you think your high school Christian service program influences your **current beliefs** about the importance of service?

Not at all, Somewhat, Significant, Very Significant, A Great Deal.

III. In this section, the researcher is interested in learning about **your experience with Christian Service Program** from your high school related to the four Catholic social teaching principles such as:

- **The life and dignity of the human person,**
- **Care for the poor,**
- **Solidarity with the poor and victims of disease or disaster, and**
- **The rights and responsibilities of individuals.**

*For the following questions the researcher is interested to learn about **your beliefs** on the four Catholic social teaching principles. Choose your answer from:*

Not at all, Somewhat, Significant, Very Significant, A Great Deal

16. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your beliefs about the importance of respecting the life and dignity ***of all human persons*** regardless of their race, color, and ethnicity.
17. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your beliefs about the importance of serving the ***poor and vulnerable***.

18. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your beliefs about the importance of expressing your ***solidarity*** for people with difficulties. (e.g. victims of poverty, disease or disaster.)
19. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your beliefs about the importance of recognizing the ***rights of individuals*** for basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, and education, and the responsibilities of the privileged individuals in responding to such needs.

For the following questions the researcher is interested to learn about your current engagement with activities related to the four Catholic social teaching principles. Choose your answer from:

Not at all, Somewhat, Significant, Very Significant, A Great Deal

20. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your current engagement with activities related to respecting life and dignity ***of all human persons*** regardless of their race, color, and ethnicity.
21. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your current engagement with service to the ***poor and vulnerable***.
22. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your current engagement in expressing your ***solidarity*** (empathy) for people with difficulties. (e.g. victims of poverty, disease, or disaster.)
23. To what extent has your Catholic high school Christian service program shaped your current engagement with activities related to affirming the ***rights of individuals*** for their basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, and education.
24. Is there anything else about your high school experience which you believe impacts your current volunteering habits?

-
25. Please write below any other comment or information you want to share about your Christian service program experience in your Catholic high school, and your current engagement in service.

-
26. (a) Would you be interested to take part in an one-on-one individual interview lasting for one hour? Yes No

(b) If your answer is "yes" to the above question, kindly provide your e-mail address and/or phone number. Your information will be kept confidential.

Your e-mail _____ , Phone _____ .

Appendix B

Survey Consent Form

I hereby authorize Antony J. Gaspar, doctoral student at Loyola Marymount University to include me in the following research study: The Impact of Catholic High School Education: Catholic High School Young Adult Alumnae Perception and Engagement in Social Justice Related Activities.

I have been asked to participate on a research study which is designed to conduct survey, and also possibly, if selected with my permission, to take part in an individual interview which will last for approximately one hour. The reason for my inclusion in this project is that I am a graduate of St. Mary's High School at (place name). In this study, I will be asked to share about my personal experiences with the Christian service program at St. Mary's High School and my current beliefs and engagement with social justice issues and activities as it relates to my Catholic high school service experience. The investigator(s) will use my perceptions, and experiences about my Catholic High School Service Program to increase an understanding about the impact of service on young adult Catholic high school alumnae. However, my identity will be concealed at all time. I understand these procedures as it is explained to me by Antony J. Gaspar.

I understand that some survey questions may expose me to uneasiness, or embarrassment. However, I have the option to skip those questions without answering them, or completely quit the survey. I also understand that the possible benefits of this study are limited to affirming my perception about my Catholic high school Christian service program experience. However, this research will be helpful to strengthen and if necessary improve the educational climate for students at Catholic high schools as well as provide ideas for future directions.

I understand that (name of the dissertation chair) who can be reached at (phone number and e-mail) will answer any questions I may have at any time concerning details of the procedures performed as part of this study.

If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time. I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study. I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law.

By choosing the “AGREE” option below I give my consent to take this survey. By choosing the "DECLINE" option I exit the survey. I understand that I can request a printed copy of this consent form at any time from the researcher.

AGREE

DECLINE

Appendix C

Individual Interview Questions

General Background Questions

1. When did you attend your Catholic high school?
2. What was the reason you chose to attend Catholic high school?

Christian Service Program

1. Thinking about your Christian Service Program experiences in high school, can you describe for me what this service was like? For example, what type of service did you do? How often?
 - a. PROMPT: (Tell me about the Christian Service Program; Describe the service you did in high school)
2. What lessons did you learn from your participation in the Christian Service Program?
3. Are you currently engaged in any service or volunteer work?
 - a. PROMPT: What do you do? How often?
4. Do you feel the Christian service program has influenced your current engagement in service? How so?
5. Do you feel the Christian service program has influenced your current beliefs and values? How so?
6. Overall, did your Christian service program impact your social justice consciousness?
 - a. PROMPT: (That you have become a better informed person about injustices done to people in society and you want to fight for their justice). Explain.
7. Anything else you'd like to share about your high school Christian Service Program?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix D

Individual Interview Consent Form

Dear _____

Thank you for your willingness to take part in this interview. My research looks at the impact of Catholic high school education on young adult alumnae's life. I am interested to hear your perspectives on Catholic high school education as you experienced, and how it impacts your life now, particularly relating to your involvement with social justice issues and activities.

The data that I collect in this project will be used for writing my dissertation and may possibly used for writing articles in the future. But your identity will always remain anonymous now and in the future. A pseudonym will be used in order to protect your identity. And the data coding system will be something like "G1" for girl #1.

There is no direct benefit to you except it may affirm your perception of Catholic high school education. However, this research will be helpful to strengthen and if necessary improve the educational climate for students at Catholic high school, and it may provide ideas for future directions of Catholic high school.

The interview will be tape recorded and it will be kept confidential. I will provide you with a copy of the written transcribed report for your review. You have the right to agree, disagree, correct, and ask me to modify the written report at any time during this entire period of research. Please read and initial the following statements if you agree to this interview.

_____ I understand that this research is intended for the study of Catholic high school educational impact on alumnae's life, which is part of the research study by Antony J. Gaspar for the Doctorate Degree in Educational Leadership at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles.

_____ Subject to the conditions stated above, I understand that Antony J. Gaspar may keep and use the information I provide in this interview today for writing dissertation thesis.

_____ I consent to tape-record this interview.

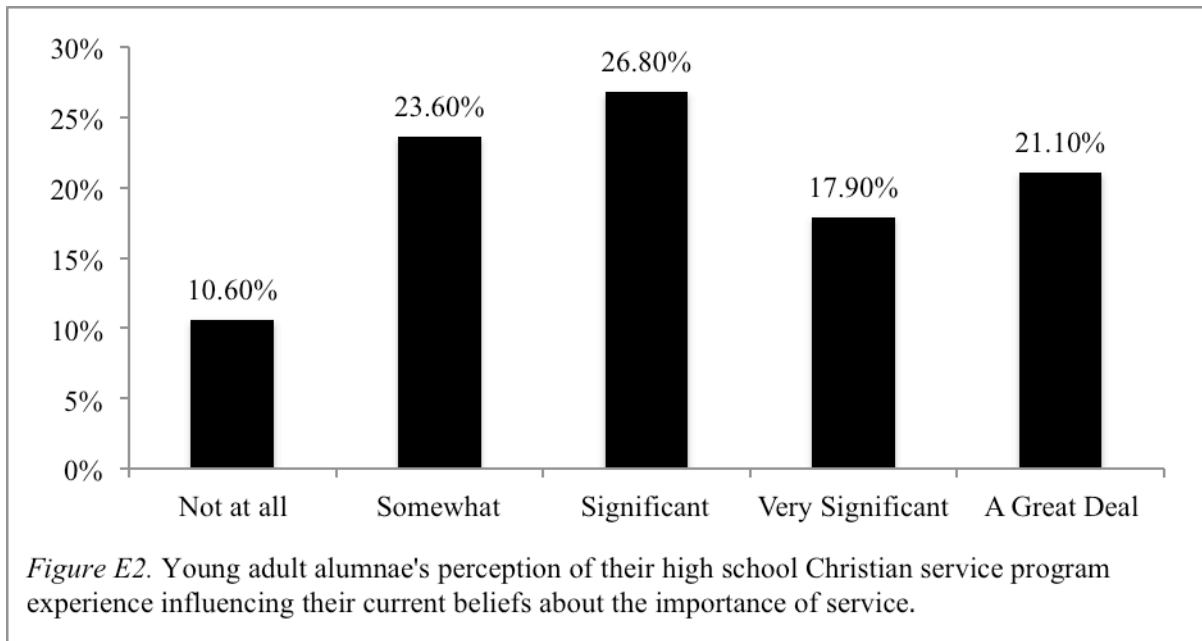
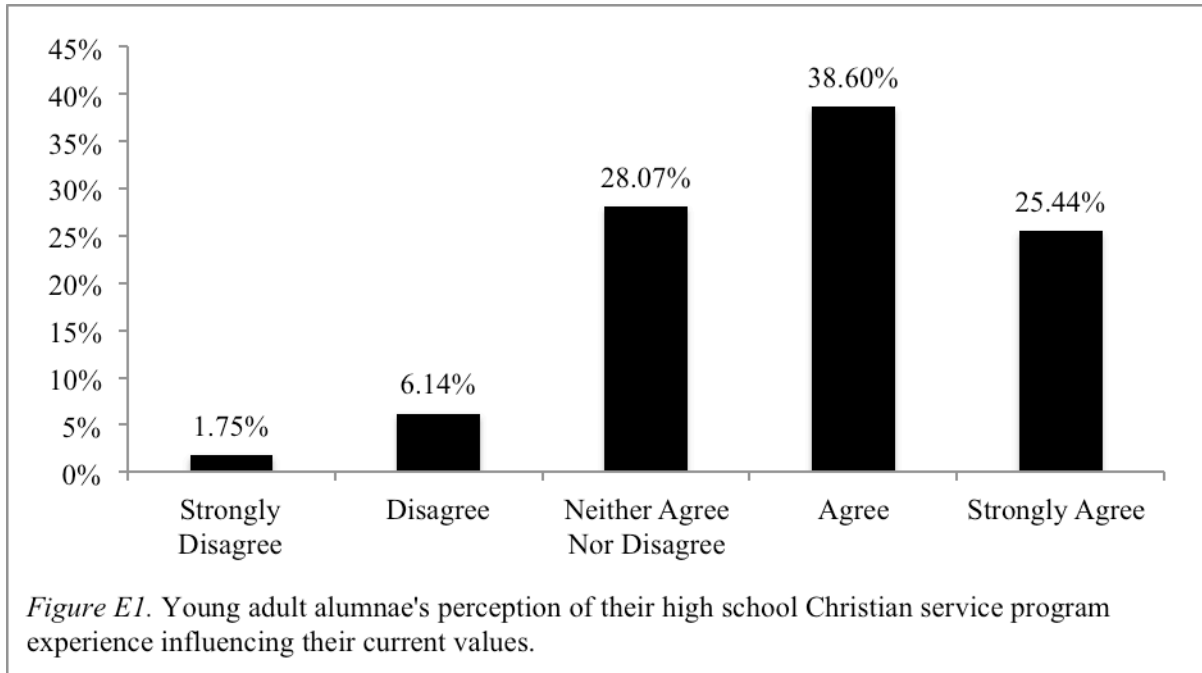
Subject to the confidentiality conditions, I authorize Antony J. Gaspar to use this interview for the purposes of this research study which may be published.

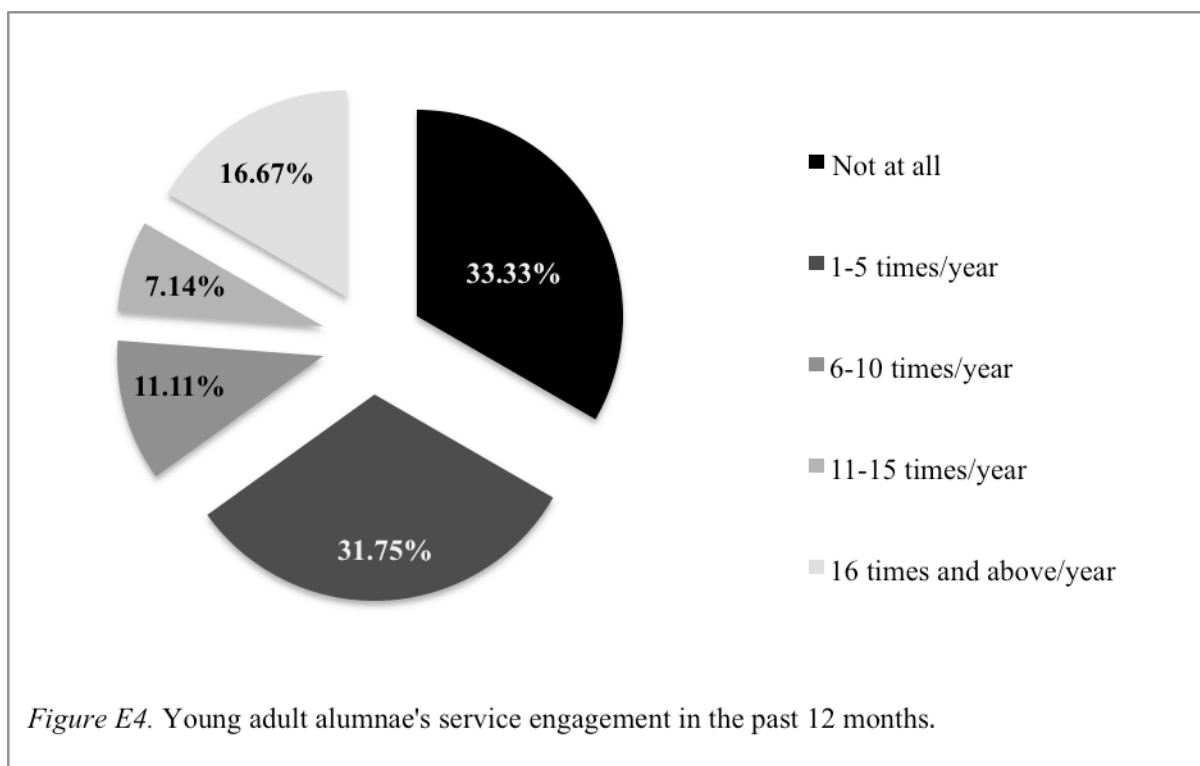
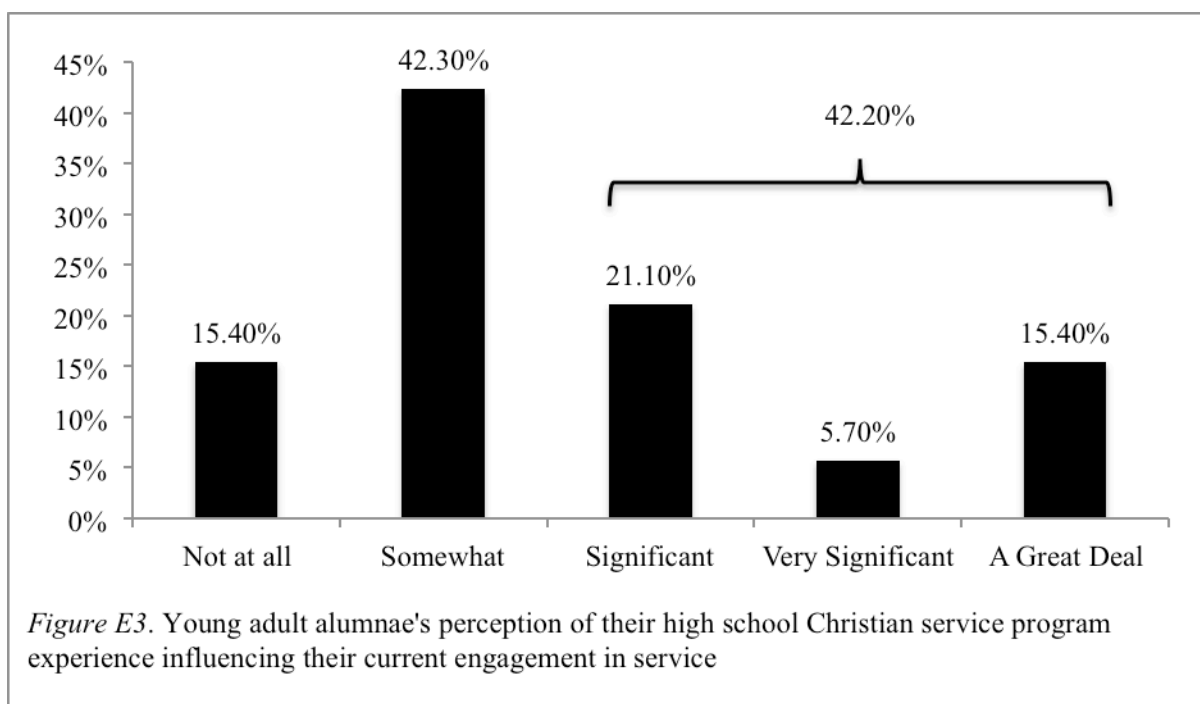
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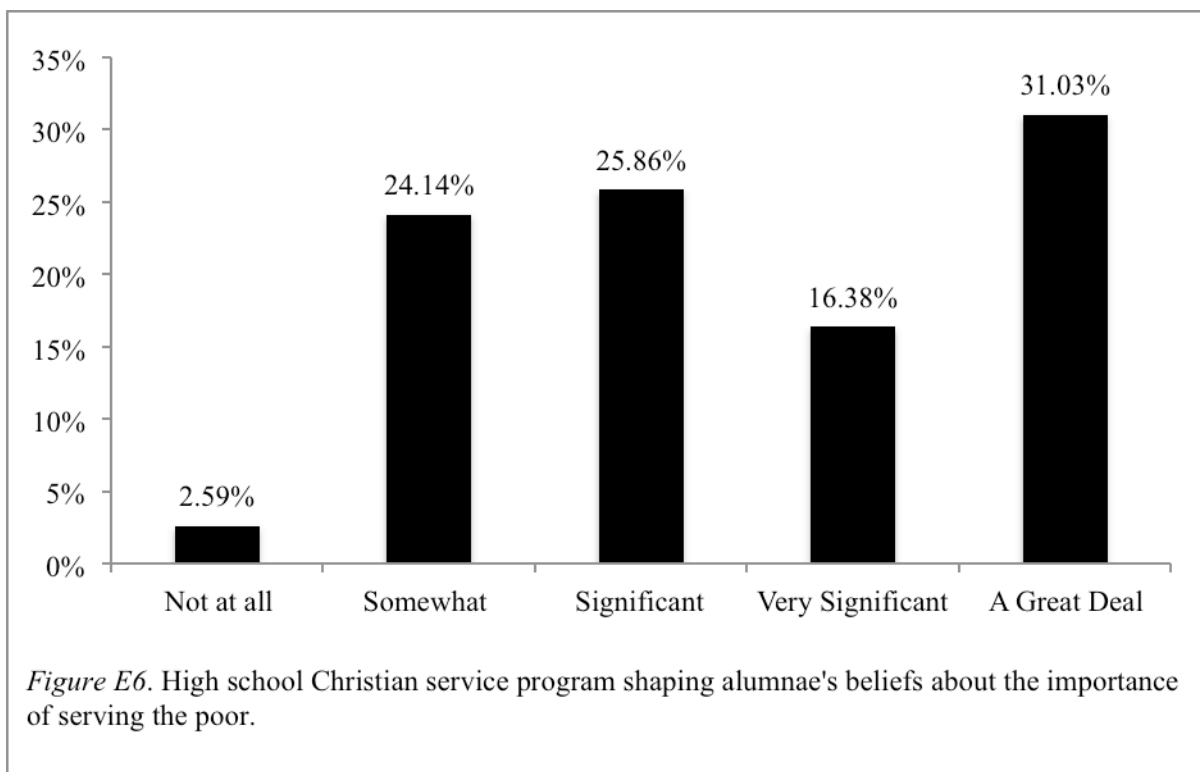
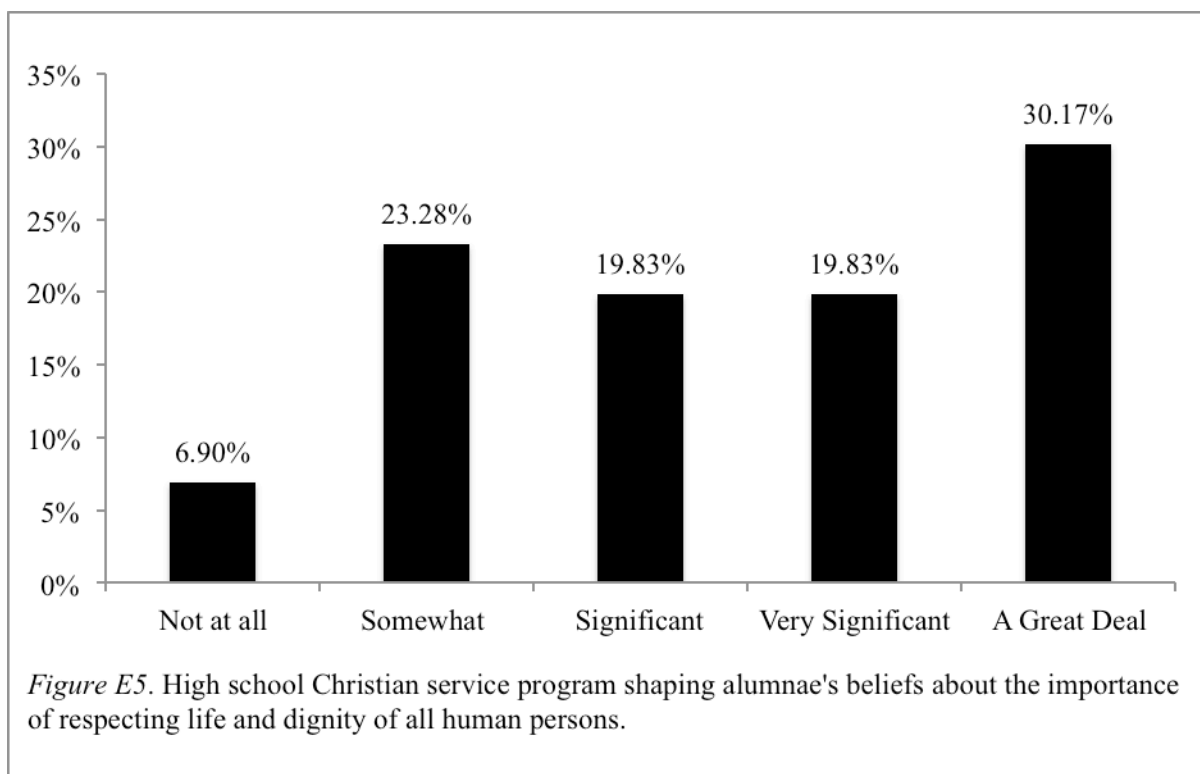
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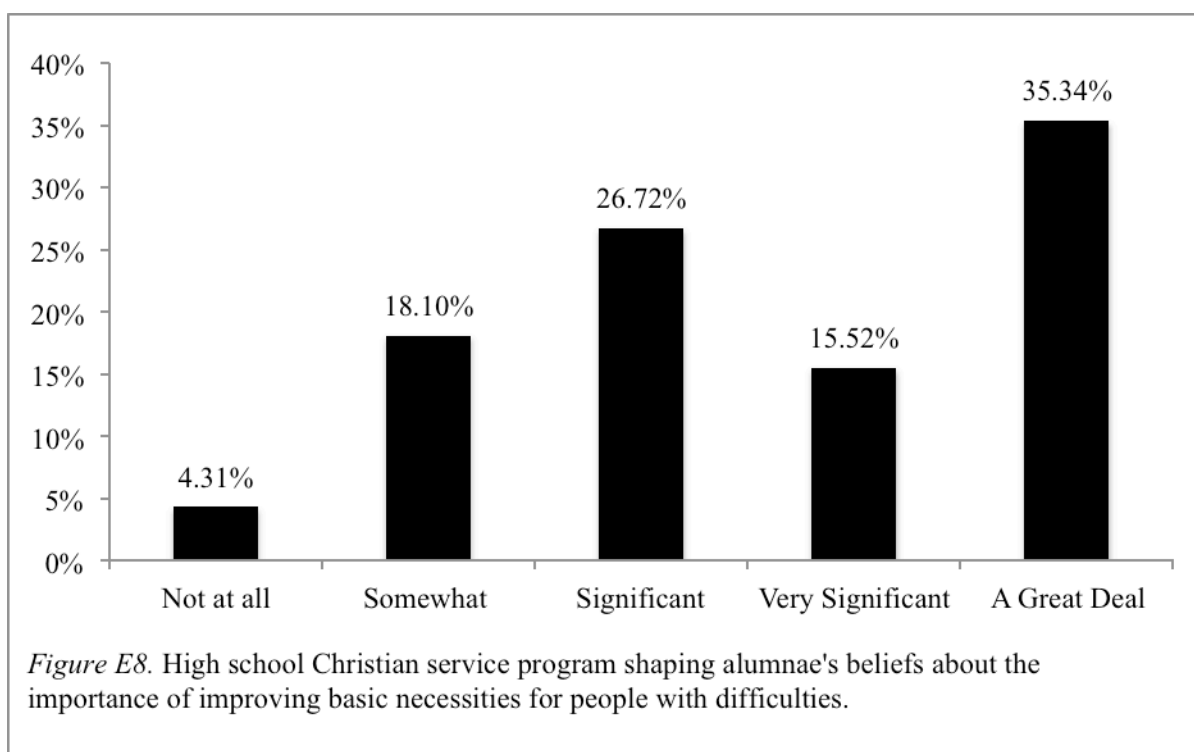
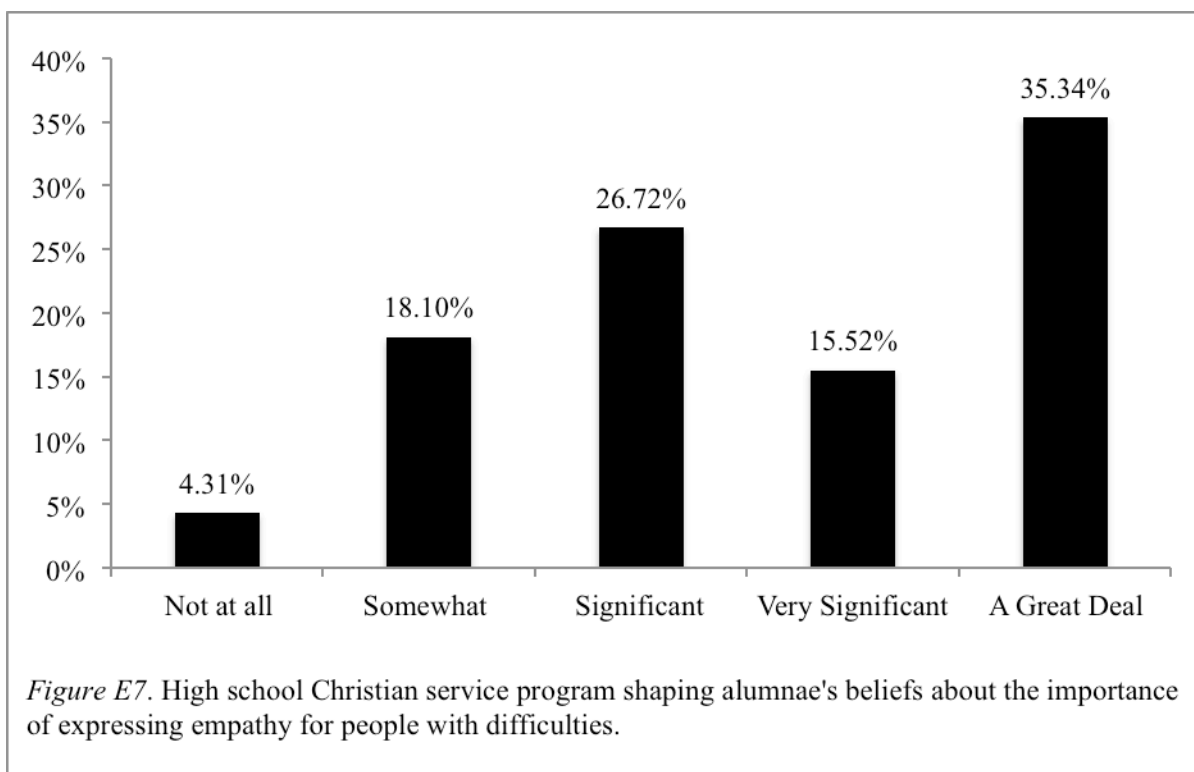
Printed Name

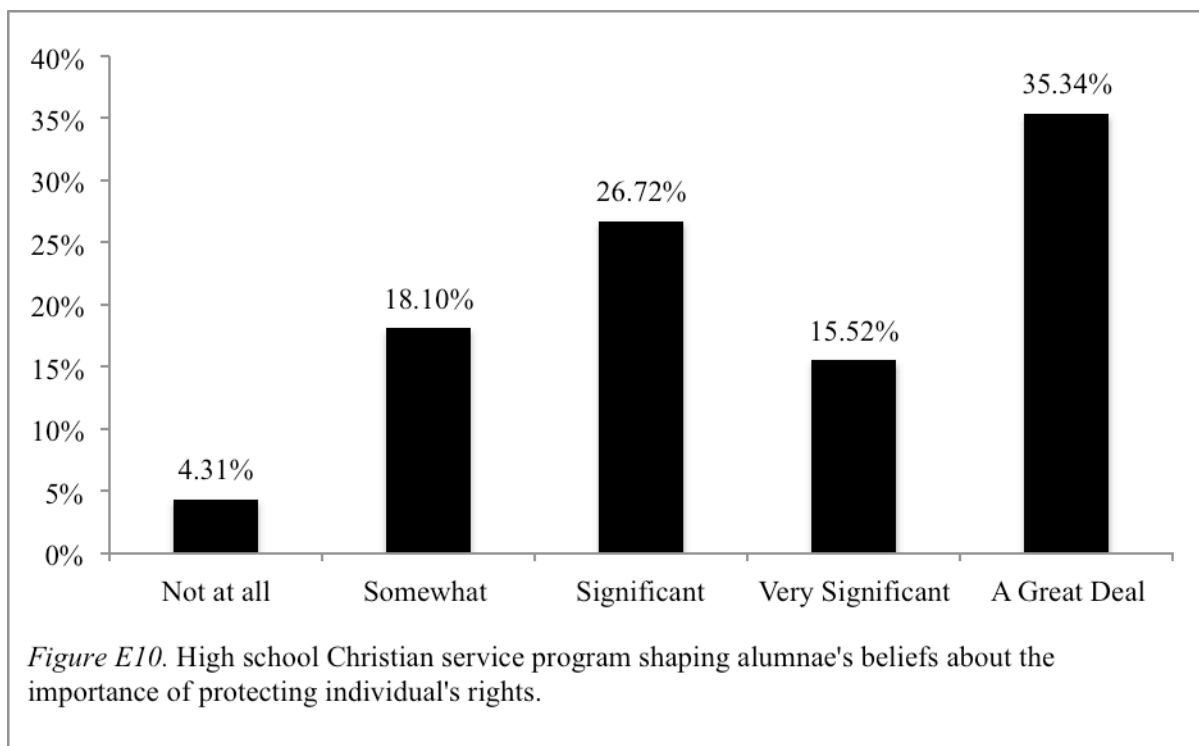
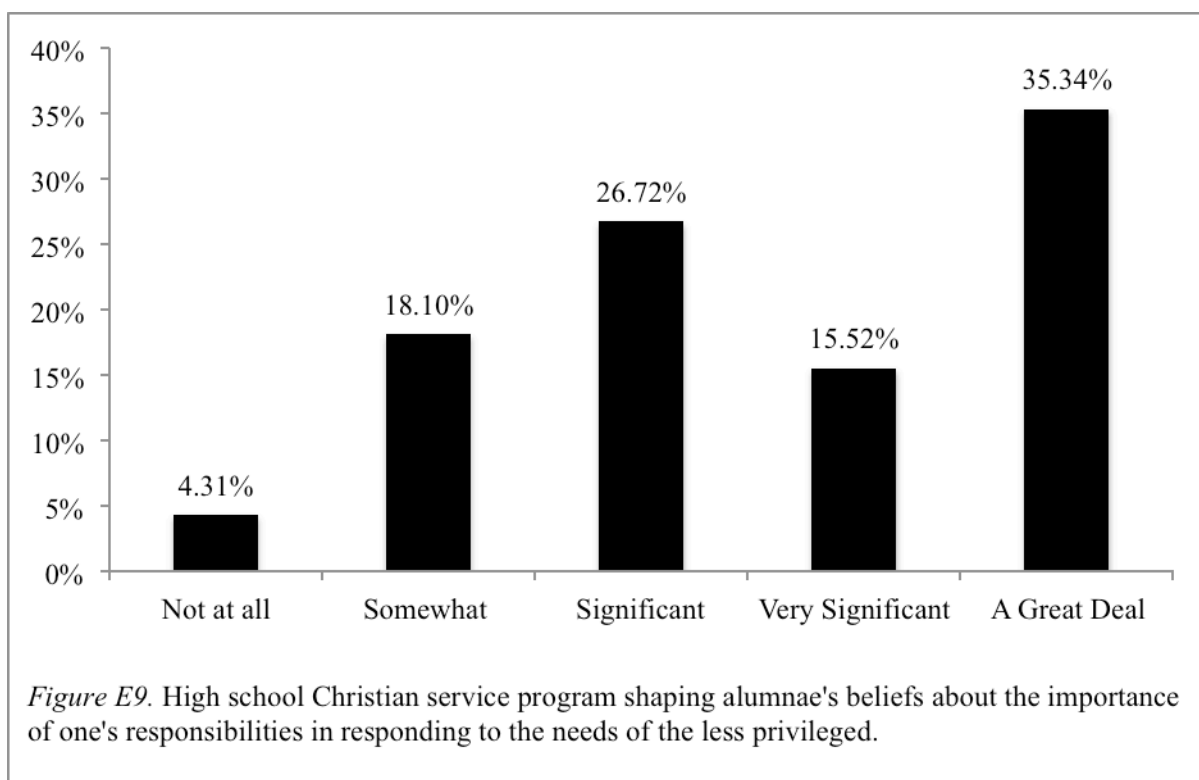
Appendix E
Graphs for Tables

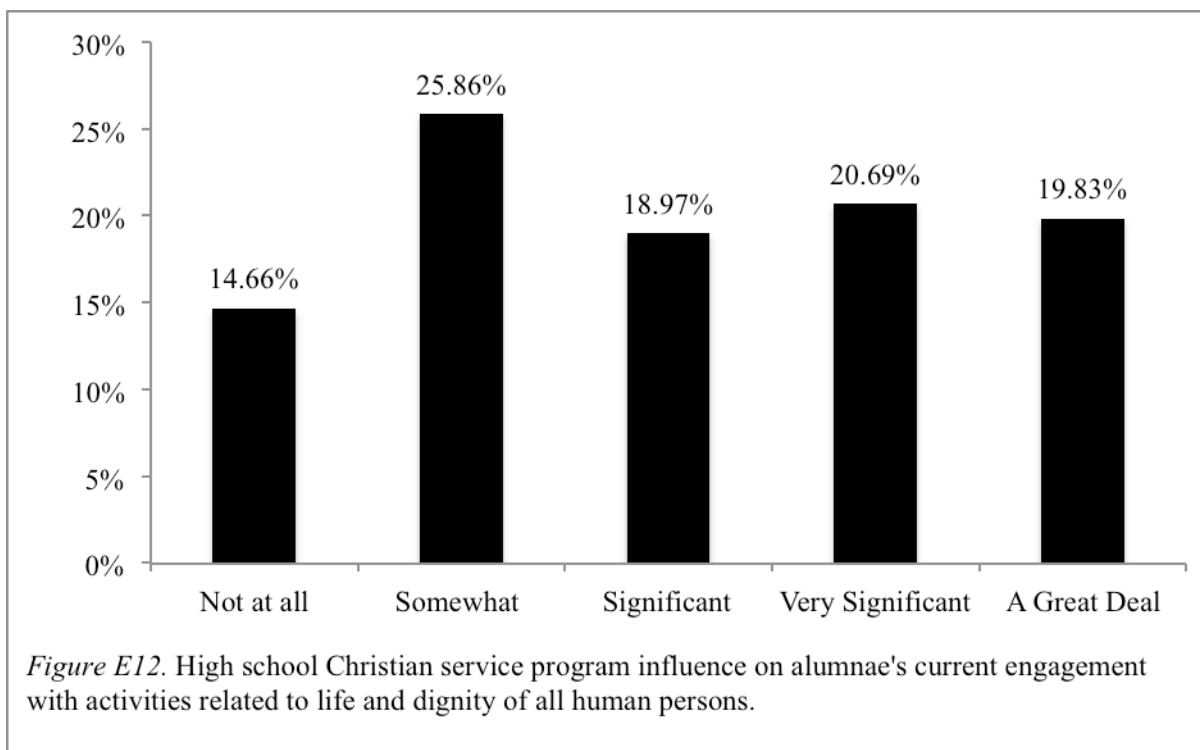
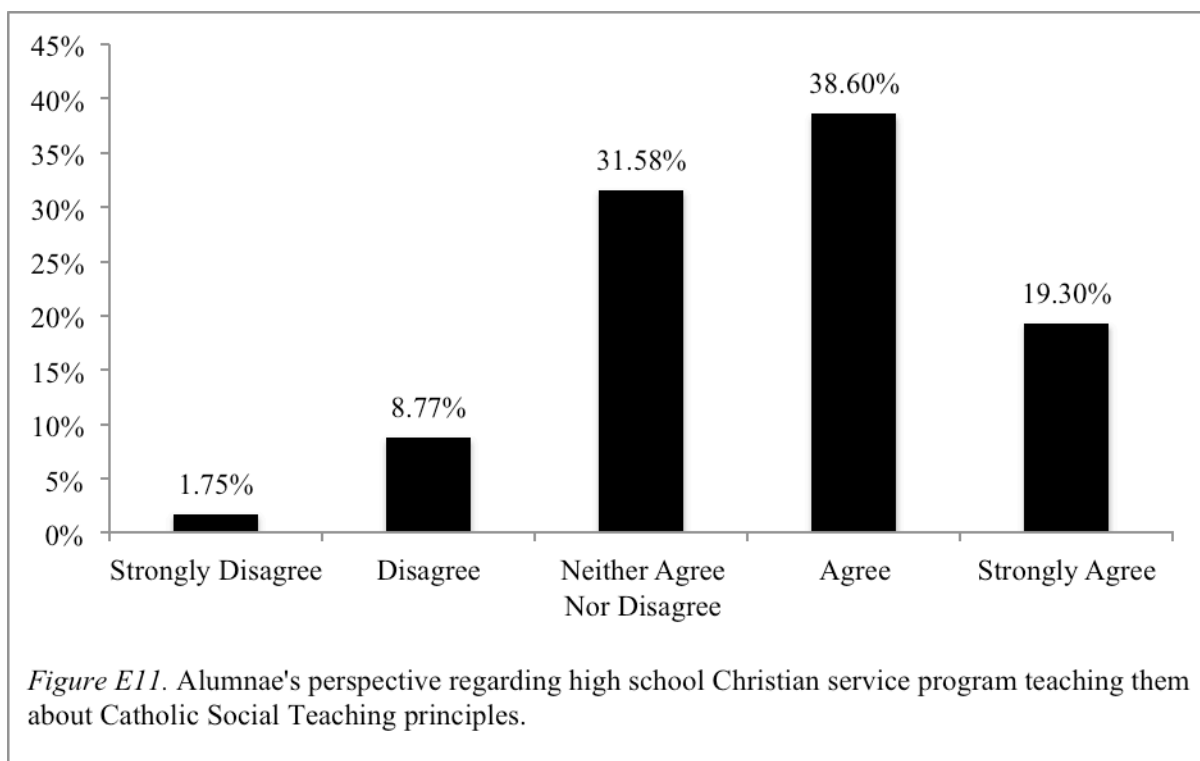


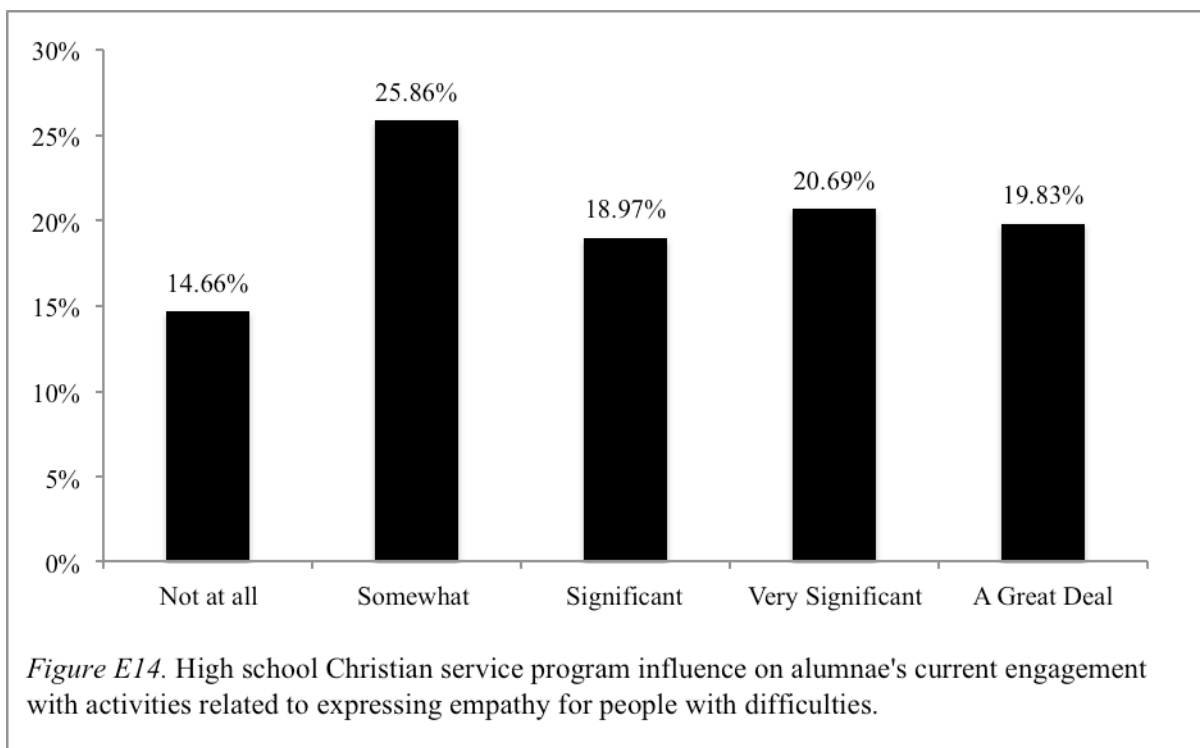
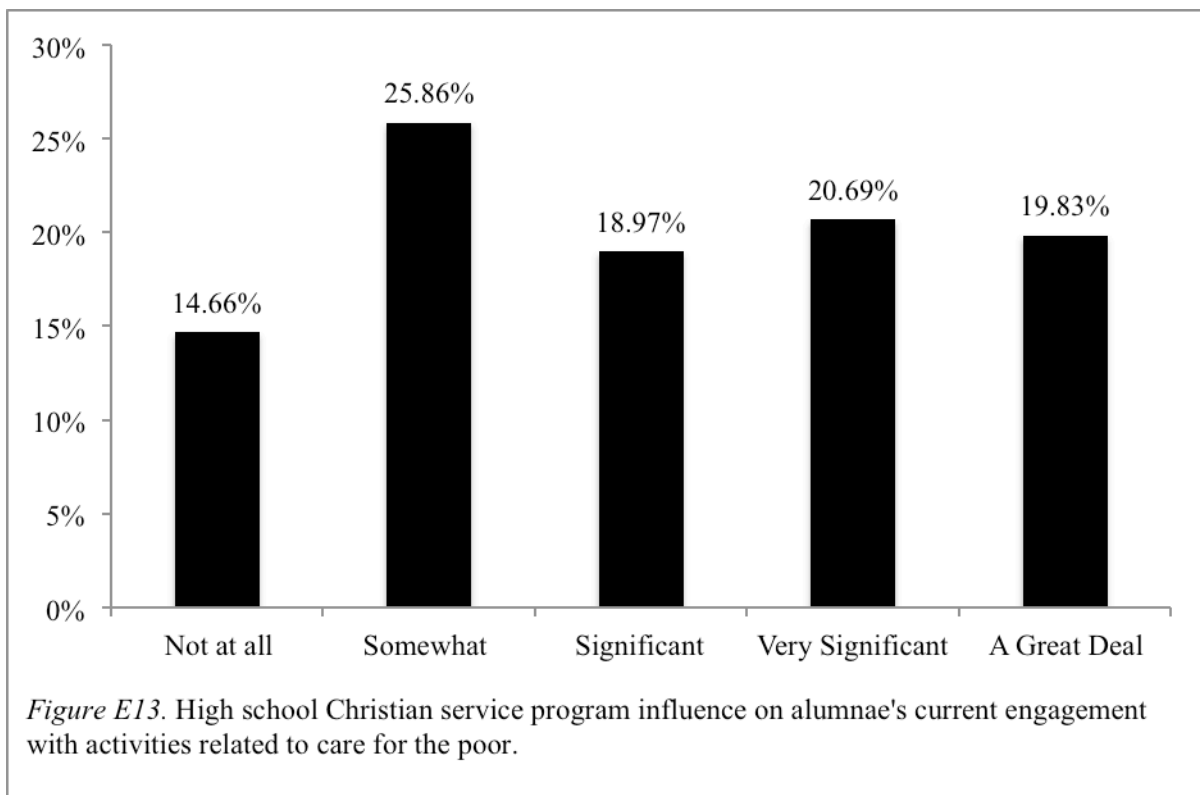


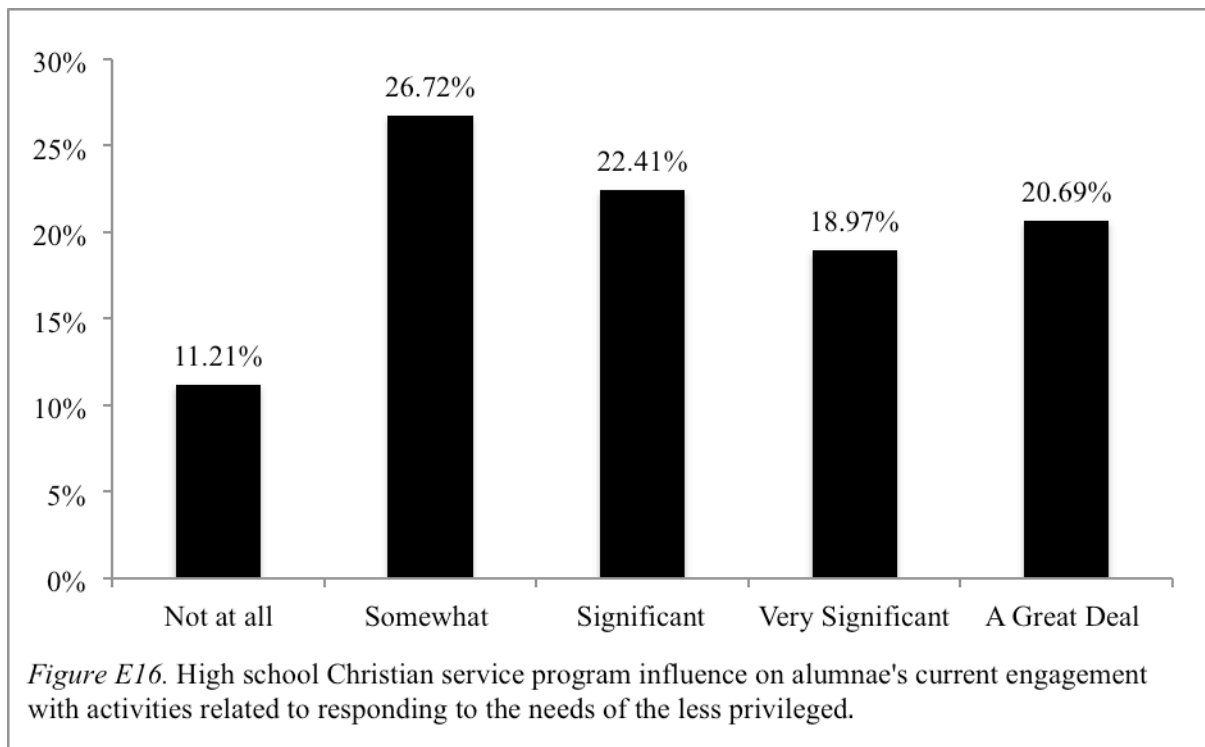
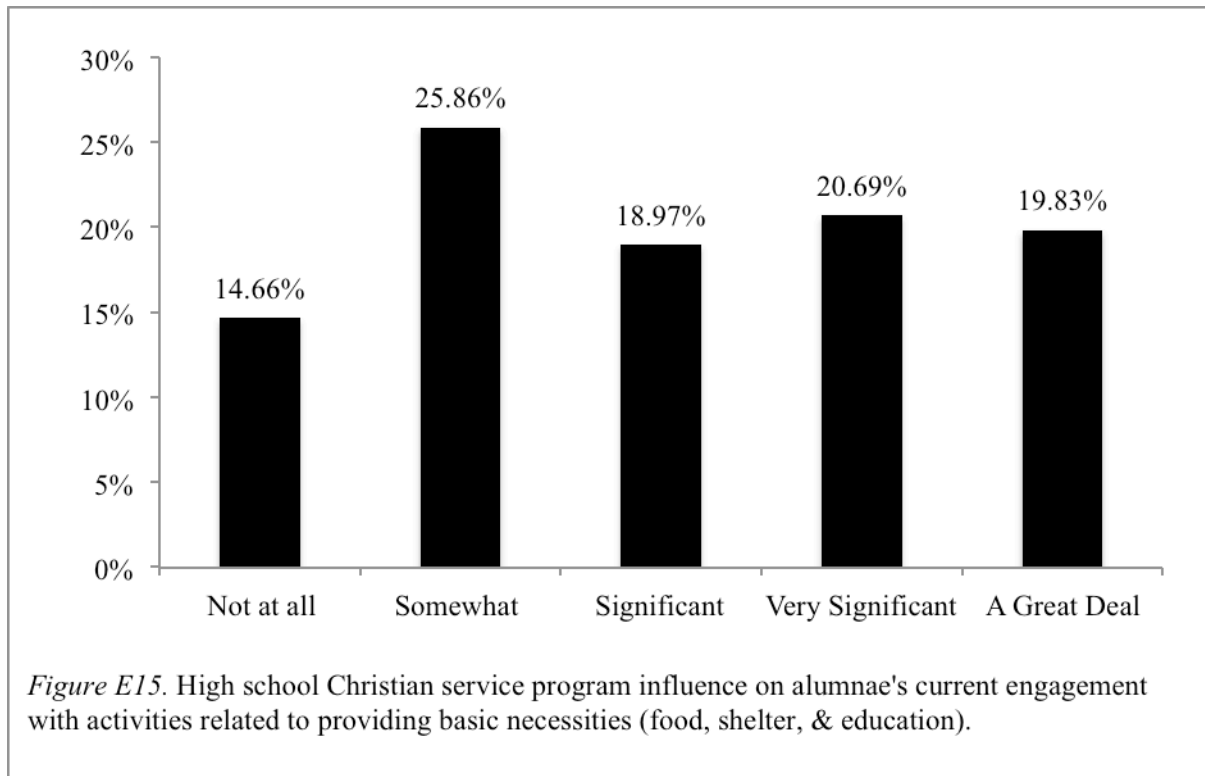


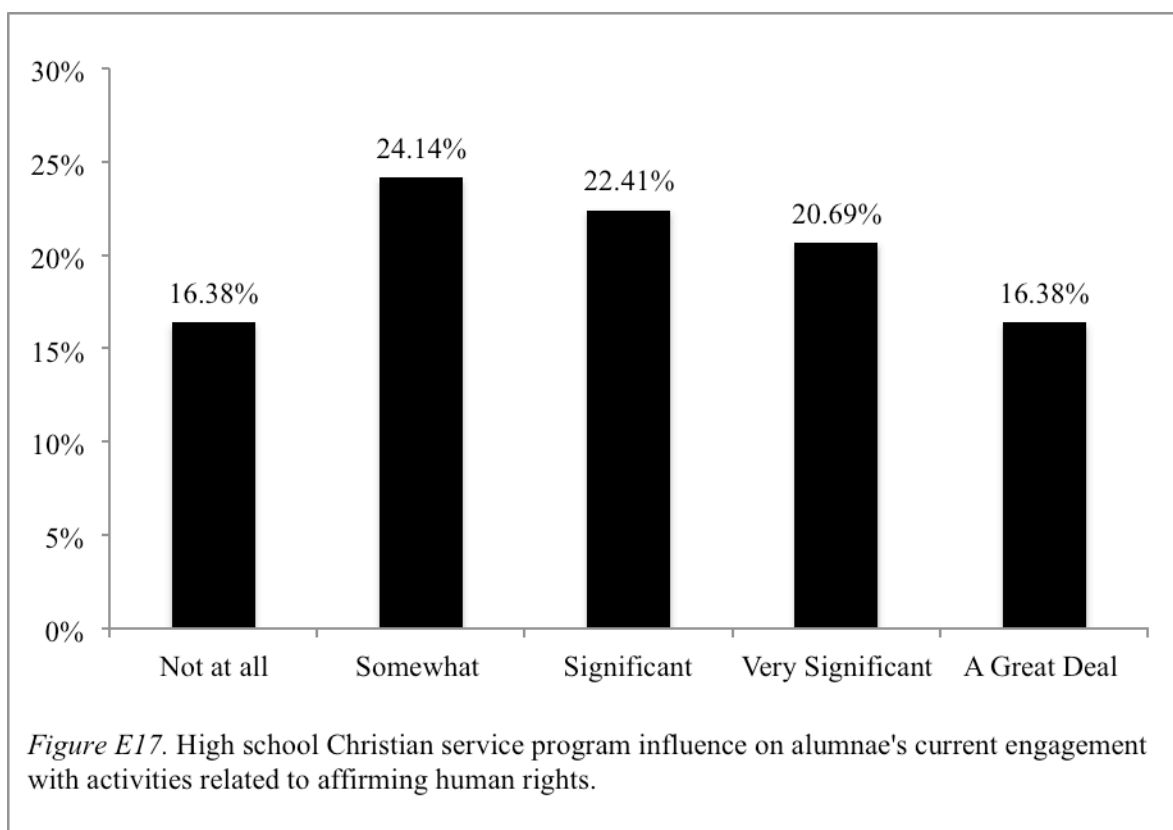












Appendix F

Coding Categories

Individual Interview and Survey Text Response

Beliefs and Values	BV
Positive Perception	PP
Negative Perception	NP
Life and Dignity of the Human Person	LD
Option for the Poor	OP
Solidarity and the Common Good	SC
Rights and Responsibilities	RR
High School Engagement	HE
Current Engagement	CE

Appendix G
Coding Categories
Document Review

Student Activity for Life and Dignity of the Human Person	SA-LD
Student Activity for Option for the Poor	SA-OP
Student Activity for Solidarity and the Common Good	SA-SC
Student Activity for Rights and Responsibilities	SA-RR
Student Policies	STP
School Policies	SCP
Explicitly stated policies in school documents	E
Implied in school documents	I

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